

PLACE-BASED EDUCATION IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS CLASSROOM

By

Lindsey K. Cassidy

DocuSigned by:

Amy Vinlove

407953270D5B40D...

Dr. Amy Vinlove
Committee Member

DocuSigned by:

Carie Green

AC628062C3C5475...

Dr. Carie Green
Committee Co-Chair

DocuSigned by:

Maureen Hogan

F4E4BE97965C466...

Dr. Maureen Hogan
Committee Co-Chair

DocuSigned by:

Cindy Fabbri

09FECB31AB7D450...

Dr. Cindy Fabbri, Chair
School of Education Graduate Program

April 21, 2016

Date

**Place-based Curriculum in the Eighth Grade
English Language Arts Classroom**

Lindsey Cassidy

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Abstract

In this project, I am investigating the role of place-based education (PBE) in the eighth grade English Language Arts (ELA) classroom and creating a place-based curriculum to use in this class. While PBE has many different definitions and connotations, I define it here as a type of education that takes advantage of the local opportunities to learn in a community and place as a basis for an educational experience. PBE engages student learning by making connections to their community through their work, identifying how their classwork is connected to life, and providing students with an authentic audience for their products beyond the school setting.

ELA is an overlooked content within PBE because it is often aligned with courses in science, social studies, or outdoors content. In reality, because ELA is a class of skills and knowledge and not content memorization, it meshes perfectly with PBE. Therefore, the focus of this project is an informational writing curriculum based on PBE methodologies embedded in ELA Alaska Standards at the eighth grade level.

Keywords: place-based, English language arts, explanatory, argumentative

Introduction

I have two deep passions in my life: being outdoors in nature and teaching ELA in the secondary classroom. I have struggled, personally, bringing these two passions together with students. It is easy to tell stories of my adventures and it is easy to teach a prescribed curriculum, but it was not easy to find a way to intertwine the two. In my early career, districts required I teach curricula to my secondary students that in no way, shape, or form resembled anything they knew in their world of rural Alaska living. High school students in a small central Yup'ik village outside of Bethel, Alaska had a difficult time grasping the setting of a sidewalk, let

alone the Bronx in the 1960s. Middle school students in Bristol Bay, Alaska could not grasp the struggles of a kid on a mid-west farm during the Dustbowl. These settings were so far removed from their own worlds, that a lack of background knowledge and vocabulary (like “sidewalk” and “grain silo”) kept most students unable to relate to protagonists their own age. Asking students to write about readings they could not relate to and could not connect with led students, and me as their teacher, to levels of frustration. How could I do what the district was asking me to do AND how could I do right by my students at the same time? I grappled with this for many of my early teaching years in rural Alaska.

Since entering the education field, I have seen science-based classes and history/social studies-based classes more easily bring the outdoors and wilderness into their classrooms because the content of the two overlap frequently. In reviewing these courses and taking inspirational education classes of my own—kayaking in Prince William Sound for educators and glaciology in southeastern Alaska for educators—and reflecting heavily on the two experiences, I decided I had to make a change. This change needed to happen for my passion as an educator, to make what I was doing on a daily basis invigorating for my own personal practice, and this change needed to happen for my students: helping them to connect with the local socio-cultural and environmental community to learn about where they currently are in order to better know where they want to go. But I have to unite my two passions while keeping the learning authentic for students.

Therefore, this project is the result of my reflection; it is a step in the direction of creating ELA courses focused on place and engaging the local community. Aforementioned, some curricula already exist, but by and large ELA is omitted from place-based discussions.

Place-based learning connects students to their local community and its members; it empowers them to effect change; it removes the idea that the classroom is the only place to learn; and it links students to the environment. This type of curriculum will still cover mandated standards and still prepare students for mandated assessments, but will engage students at a higher-level and focus on their personal interests.

My desire for my students is that they see every moment in my classroom as meaningful. I want them to believe that the activities I ask them to do are authentic and relevant. The relationships that they build with me, each other, and with local experts while in my class I hope are viewed as meaningful and based in mutual respect. And I hope that the learning that happens is deep and helps build better local citizens now, for better global citizens later.

Place-based education can be compared with a trail that has become overgrown: you cannot particularly see where you are headed, though you know you are moving in the right direction because you know people were there before as you slowly step forward and use your feet to “feel” the trail below while tall grass, wide bushes, and low tree boughs obscure the view of the route ahead. It will keep an educator invigorated and on their toes as they walk the path of place-based curriculum alongside their students.

Rationale

John Dewey, in the 19th century, stated his concern for the lack of connection between a student’s classroom work and their real lives. He believed this disconnect would cause lower student engagement rates and in effect, less learning (Dewey, 1907).

Current and past educators tout PBE throughout the education world as a technique to involve students in their learning, their communities, and their environments (Sobel, 1996). This type of buy-in for students is what increases student motivation in their education (Powers, 2004, p. 27). However, the traditional subjects that are most often linked with PBE methodologies are science and history/social studies courses. Nontraditional courses include environmental education and outdoor education that explore PBE activities outdoors. ELA is not a popular pairing for PBE.

However, Alaska ELA standards are many-layered and diverse, covering five different areas: reading for literature, reading for information, three main writing genres, speaking and listening, and language (Alaska Department of Education and Early Development, 2012). Within each of the five categories are upwards of ten standards each, many standards even have sub-standards, some with upwards of five sub-standards. When reviewing the number of skills ELA teachers must cover and assist students towards proficiency, finding an avenue that is most effective to keeping students engaged and motivated is essential. When the learning is dynamic and exciting, engagement is inherent. This is what PBE has had to offer ELA content courses since their inception.

Theoretical Framework

In its origins, inquiry learning (also known as problem-based, experiential, or constructivist), which many who use place-based also subscribe to, uses minimal guidance for instruction and instead makes students build understanding on their own (Kirschner, Sweller, Clark, 2006, p. 75). However, studies have shown that “minimally guided instruction is likely to be ineffective” (Kirschner et al., 2006, p. 76). Instead, the evidence “uniformly supports direct,

strong instructional guidance rather than constructivist-based minimal guidance during the instruction of novice to intermediate learners” (Kirschner et al., 2006, p. 83). Therefore, scaffolding is essential when introducing new information, even in a learner-centered approach like place-based education. If students are to retain information and perform at their highest potential, instruction must be explicit until students have reached a near grade-level proficiency or comprehension of a skill and are ready to apply it with higher-order thinking. Minimally guided educational opportunities have their place in education; however, it must be provided when the students are prepared for it and not assume they will achieve proficiency of new skills on their own.

Vygotsky (1978) identified the “Zone of Proximal Development” (ZPD) and defined it as “the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers” (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86). Educators know that when introducing a new concept, a teacher must scaffold students’ learning so they are successfully working within their ZPD. Scaffolding allows teachers to support students learning new skills until students are confident and prepared to demonstrate proficiency on a demanding task individually, without reaching a level of frustration.

Benko (2012) calls scaffolding with writing instruction “reducing degrees of freedom”; this allows teachers to reduce the cognitive load until students have mastered smaller, basic parts of a task and are prepared to move up to a more sophisticated type of writing (p. 295). This makes for effective instruction and effective learning.

Additionally, scaffolding takes multiple forms. By working with peers to practice a writing skill before creating an individual and final composition for assessment, a student's work and learning is scaffolded. Applebee and Langer (1987) claim that "effective writing instruction provides carefully structured support or scaffolding as students undertake new and more difficult tasks" (p. 139). As students practice with meeting expectations for a variety of writing genres before moving into their individual writing assignment, educators are able to scaffold and support students through collaborative work and collaborative essay writing.

A common scaffolding strategy is the "I do, we do, y'all do, you do" modeling strategy, otherwise known as the gradual release of responsibility method. Effective writing teachers determine a pace to release responsibility when assisting students through scaffolded steps until students understand how to complete a task or a skill on their own using the gradual release of responsibility method. Educators "intentionally transition" the responsibility from themselves to the students by the end of a lesson or unit (Ainsworth, 2010, p. 245). First, teachers model how to do the task, the "I do"; then the class will work together, the "we do"; then smaller groups will work together (like the PBE curriculum project designed and discussed in the final project section later in this paper), the "y'all do" portion; and finally students work on their own, the final "you do" piece. This allows for students to move towards higher skill levels, and "when students have mastered a skill, teachers can encourage them with new challenges" (Benko, 2012, p. 29).

Educational researcher Archer (2011), in her text *Explicit Instruction*, identifies the foundational steps of explicit instruction that an educator should follow for instruction to be meaningful and well organized. These steps include: presentation of material, guided practice

through the information, and finally independent practice (Archer & Hughes, 2011, p. 4). By scaffolding learning in this deliberate manner, “students can learn new basic skills as well as more complex skills, maintain a high level of success as they do so, and systematically move toward independent use of a skill” (p. 10).

Therefore, assisting students within their ZPD by providing scaffolding to include collaborating with peers and teachers in addition to explicit instruction with example texts, will prepare them for success with final and authentic individual performance tasks and assessments. Because of this, it will be a fundamental piece to the organizing of the curriculum project; students will be scaffolded to learn new writing and researching skills within their ZPD by working with their peers to continue practicing before working individually.

Literature Review

Place-Based Education

Because outdoor education programs initiated PBE, it is important to identify why it was so successful in this early stage as well as how it morphed and continues successfully within modern classroom experiences. Victor (2013) identifies that outdoor education is supportive of student growth in the fields of social relationships, technical outdoor skills, and increasing retention numbers for differing programs (p. 84-85). Louv’s (2005) book, *Last Child in the Woods*, focuses on how spending a life indoors rather than out-of-doors will lead to physical and psychological health concerns. He, among many others, speaks for getting students outside in a very traditional sense of the phrase “place-based education.” Additionally, he and other PBE supporters push for this methodology of education because people will protect items and places they know and cherish; by getting students outside, educators are creating the next

conservationists to protect these beloved places. Sobel (2007) agrees with Louv (2005), reiterating that students need connection to the “natural world” through PBE curriculum by working within their communities and are building and sharing an “ethic of care” for the land (p. 18). Gruenewald (2008) continues to build on his contemporaries’ work, suggesting that students will have “direct bearing on the wellbeing of the social and ecological places they actually inhabit” (p. 308). He criticizes the status quo mandates for involving a standardized system that is a “‘placeless’ curriculum” which “limits, devalues, and distorts local geographical experience” by reinforcing that teachers and students should be inside the institutional classroom rather than engaged in the local community (p. 317). Because of these findings and many more touting similar results, many institutions at a variety of educational levels now incorporate PBE, or similar outdoor education courses, within their classes.

Place-based education is not a prepackaged curriculum; it is about getting students out of the classroom and investing in their community. One researcher, Smith (2002), suggests it is as simple as getting students outside their school to turn a brown space into a school garden after mapping the area and identifying local plants to grow in the space (p. 32).

As aforementioned, PBE is often embedded within several content areas in the educational system. History/social studies is one such content-based subject area that readily makes connections and seeks to incorporate PBE ideals more than other subjects. Evans (2013) identifies specific ways that history/social studies lends itself well to PBE. One such way is that curriculum of this field reflects essential characteristics of student learning in PBE programs, like “citizenship, critical thinking, and social studies skills” (p. 268) as well as “mapmaking, . . . and nature journaling” (p. 274). Specifically, the geography classroom is also a content area that

lends itself to PBE, according to Post (2012). PBE and geography class curriculum encourage students and teachers to “examine our commemorated, memorialized, and preserved landscapes. . . [which focuses on] place, the landscape, and their ultimate meanings to our communities” (Post, 2012, p. 351). Geographers, he continues, should reach out to their community because of the multidisciplinary ties between a community and the curricular abilities to connect; this type of learning is very dynamic and engaging for students (Post, 2012, p. 352).

But PBE and ELA courses also share a commonality other courses do not: literacy. As Gruenewald (2003) cited, "modern culture and its educational institutions reinforce models of development and literacy that totally neglect human connection to the nonhuman world" (p. 33). Historically, as human language developed and proliferated, the language connected humans to their land and to each other. Words and phrases were developed with the sole purpose to explain what was going on around early humans. At this time, the natural world and language were well interlaced. Gruenewald (2003) suggests a reimagining of literacy education to incorporate the natural world again to bring back the human connection to place rather than the consistent connection between modern language and technologies that constrain people to artificial environments indoors.

PBE and ELA will motivate students when partnering to create a unit that will connect them to the local place and create authentic opportunities for reading and writing. By formally interlacing PBE and ELA throughout a curriculum, students will have authentic place-based ELA lessons to motivate learning and mastery.

Sobel (2004) in his book, *Place-based education: Connecting classrooms and communities*, defines place-based education in a way that would make it the perfect fit regardless the content area or standards:

Place-based education is the process of using the local community and environment as a starting point to teach concepts in language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, and other subjects across the curriculum. Emphasizing hands-on, real-world learning experiences, this approach to education increases academic achievement, helps students develop stronger ties to their community, enhances students' appreciation for the natural world, and creates a heightened commitment to serving as active, contributing citizens. Community vitality and environmental quality are improved through the active engagement of local citizens, community organizations, and environmental resources in the life of the school. (p. 11)

Sobel (2004) further discusses that place-based education has evolved into a "pedagogy of place" from its environmental education roots (p. 17). By focusing students on the local aspects of their community and environment, classrooms of any grade-level, content, and standards have something to gain.

Green, Kalvaitis, & Worster (2015) clarify age-appropriate place-based education in their article *Recontextualizing psychosocial development in young children: A model of environmental identity development*. At the uppermost level of environmental identity development (EID) as this proposed place-based curriculum is designed for, Green et al. identify "environmental action," or the stage that transitions students from playing in nature to promoting action in

nature for the benefit of the environment (p. 6). This environmental action allows students to embrace their sense of place of their community and local environment.

White & Stoeklin (2008) agree with Green et al. (2015) that adolescence is a time to introduce social action. When students enter this level of maturation, an inherent desire to “save the world” manifests itself (p. 5). These authors suggest further that the local piece is pertinent; these opportunities to improve the world should “be focused at the local level where children can relate to the outcomes” (p. 5).

Sobel (1996) further supports the research regarding adolescence and social action in his text *Beyond ecophobia*, suggesting that this type of education best resonates with students ages 12 to 15+. Sobel (2004) reiterated the need for the focus to be local, calling this type of curriculum “saving the neighborhood” (p. 27). He identifies that in this age range, as students start to find their individual voice and discover who they are, they have an innate inclination to solve the problems of the world around them. By providing students of this age with social-action projects appropriate to developmental level, educators are promoting that inherent desire to help others that students are physiologically developing on their own.

Demarest (2015), in her text *Place-based Curriculum Design*, identifies four categories of place-based curriculum. Although many times the four types overlap in shades of grey, her chapter *Local investigations build opportunity for civic engagement* is the category that this proposed place-based ELA curriculum aligns with and is best fit for this age range, as identified previously. She defines this type of place-based curriculum as a time for students to “explore and address problems and issues that plague society. . . [while] . . . pursuing answers to students’ questions” (p. 85). Demarest explains this type of curriculum embeds a more

traditional education into existing problems within a community. Educators do not know where this line of inquiry will end up, but rather the focus of the unit unfolds holistically as students research their topic (p. 85).

Throughout this research, students and teachers are building authentic relationships and partnerships with local experts and organizations. Students know their work is authentic in this type of curriculum and they are motivated because they know their product is meaningful (p. 93). They “like the challenge, the newness of the work, and the feeling that they are doing something worthwhile” (Demarest, 2015, p. 96).

Demarest (2015) further encourages teachers embracing place-based curriculum to “break away from traditional texts” as the sole location of information in order to think of “place as text” (p. 103-104). When teachers are able to think outside of the box with their curriculum, authentic learning will flourish.

Place-based education = Problem-based learning

It is clear that place-based education, when focused on social action and civic duty, is nearly a synonym for problem-based learning. These two educational buzzwords are comparable and “closely related” (Smith, 2013, p. 213).

Problem-Based Learning (PBL) is defined by Hung (2008) as “a student-centered pedagogical strategy that poses significant, contextualized, real-world, ill-structured situations [or problems] while providing resources, guidance, instruction, and opportunities for reflection to learners as they develop content knowledge and problem skills” (Hung, 2008, p. 19). At its base, this educational model creates real-life applications for students’ learning. This type of teaching and learning originated at medical universities for pre-service doctors as a way to

educate medical students in real-life scenarios. Since its inauguration at these universities, PBL has trickled down the educational ladder, all the way down into our primary schools (Hung, 2008, p. 18).

Sugur and Tekkaya (2006) suggest that problem-based learning is so effective because of its embedded philosophy of being student-centered and putting the learning responsibility on the student, a definition that emulates the philosophy of place-based education. Specifically, the researchers identify that it is the self-regulated learning portion that leads students to be so successful. According to Sugur and Tekkaya (2006), “self-regulated students set goals effectively, plan and use strategies to achieve their goals, manage resources, and monitor their progress” (p. 307). It is clear how self-regulation would lead students to success in the academic arena as well as personal one.

Place-based learning in the English Language Arts Classroom

Even though experts, like Hung, have created avenues for place-based curricula to develop across content areas, few educators attempt ELA units. More often, science-based, mathematics-based, and social studies or civics-based classes focus on PBL curriculum. However, Chapman (2002) embedded PBL in his post-secondary Communications Arts class. His outcomes were well documented and quite successful.

Chapman’s goal for his class was to give his students real-life and real-world application for their reading, writing, and speaking (Chapman, 2002, p. 257). Chapman decided on this method because it is the antithesis of the over-used teacher-as-sage method of lecture-based classes often found at the post-secondary level (p. 261). Because ELA classes focus on skill and knowledge rather than memorization of content, his class was easily modified to fit into this

model and still focused on helping students meet learning targets and outcomes. As a result, Chapman (2002) found that his students identified their class work as more rewarding and were intrinsically motivated to complete their tasks at a higher level. He was “impressed by the improved quality of their work” in contrast with the previous years when he had not incorporated this type of method (p. 262).

Another example of place-based learning in the ELA content is from Michael (2005) cofounder, along with U.S. Poet Laureate Hass, and executive director of *River of Words*. She explains how this curriculum uses the arts, including language arts, in addition to science to build connections with place. Further, she details this curriculum in her article *Helping children fall in love with the earth: Environmental education and the arts*. At the heart of the curriculum is a “Watershed Explorer” curriculum guide that uses the arts and science to learn about a bioregion’s water source with the goal to assist students in developing “a sense of belonging to a particular place” (p. 113). Annually, *River of Words* holds a national poetry and art contest focused on watersheds as a theme. This contest publishes student poems and original artwork in an annual publication. Literacy-based activities of this nature allow students to build knowledge about their local watershed as well as specific poetry-literacy skills.

Clearly, place-based curricula support students in finding authentic ways to connect their work to real life. Having these authentic learning scenarios engages students and makes learning meaningful.

Place-based Education and the Data

These models extend far beyond getting classes outside of a school building and demonstrate meaningful results to educators and parents. Smith & Sobel (2010) suggest that

these methods are now more important than ever as only 40-60% of U.S. students are engaged with their education, many of whom will drop out before graduating (p. 39). They go on to suggest that when educators can make their class relatable to real life, students find value in their learning and are more inclined to continue with their education (p. 39). Gregory Smith (2002) also cites interesting statistics, stating that these methods can offer just as “demanding tasks that stimulate student engagement and achievement” as a traditional classroom (p. 33). Evans (2012) cited “that students in the schools which used place-based education score higher on standardized tests in reading, writing, math, science, and social studies” (p. 273). To further support place-based education in the classroom, educators use the logic model “which asserts that if a similar approach resulted in improved academic engagement and performance, once can hypothesize that comparable instructional strategies will lead to similar results” in other settings (Smith, 2013, p. 215). Smith (2015) cited that the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) found a positive correlation between students from the classrooms of teachers who used authentic assessments and high scores on the NAEP assessment (p. 216). Place-based education is very focused on authentic learning for real audiences.

Authors Lieberman and Hoody (1998) of the State Education and Environment Roundtable (SEER) consortium review of participatory schools in *Closing the achievement gap*, studied how twelve of sixteen states that use the environment as an integrating context, another niche of place-based education, affected student academic performance. Going into the research, many expected students’ science performance to increase; however, no one foresaw the increased scores across the disciplines. They found that the benefits of this type of curriculum on literacy skills, including reading, writing, and language were obvious, and that

“on the average, the...students outperformed their peers from traditional programs” (p. 4).

Students not only developed skills in these areas, but they also developed a “greater enthusiasm for language arts” (p. 4). Over all of the 14 schools who participated in a comparative analysis reviewing 39 aspects, “92% of these comparisons indicate that students who have been in [these] programs academically outperform their peers in traditional programs” (p. 2).

It is clear that intertwining a focus on the local and the focus on the authentic will create a motivating ELA unit for students to create projects, learn, and reach mastery on content standards and beyond.

Designing a Meaningful Unit

Dr. Hung (2008) has researched Problem-based Learning at length and developed a 9-step process for developing an effective PBL curriculum in his 2008 article, *The 9-step problem design process for problem-based learning: Application of the 3C3R model*. Below are the nine steps he identified, which I closely considered when creating the curricular project embedding PBE into an ELA classroom (Hung, 2008, p. 123):

1. Set goals and objectives
2. Conduct content/task analysis
3. Analyze context specification
4. Select/generate PBL problem
5. Conduct PBL problem affordance analysis
6. Conduct correspondence analysis
7. Conduct calibration processes

8. Construct reflection component
9. Examine inter-supporting relationships.

Hung's research covers well-rounded PBL curricula as well as ill-conceived plans. He admits PBL was not always effective and cites multiple studies that clearly demonstrate its ineffectiveness. This nine-step process for developing a unit is in response of the faultily-designed programs he analyzed. These steps assist educators and students to find success with the units and allow students to reach their full potential.

Statement of Bias

My bias lies in my belief that students should connect and contribute to their communities. When they leave our community after high school, they will have a better understanding of who they are and where they are headed if they know where they are from and how they fit into our community. In addition, I believe that in order to demonstrate their best work, students should have an authentic audience for their final compositions and projects. When they do, they are more connected to their learning and create a real product by the end of a unit to demonstrate their hard work and learning.

My bias also lies in my field of study. I believe that ELA lends itself well to any task because this content area is skill and knowledge-based; students may research, read, and write about any topic in ELA, rather than requiring specific content memorization to pass a course. I believe that scaffolding any ELA task will help students learn new skills, and that while working in cooperative groups to produce writing, everyone can compose something and contribute in some fashion.

Additionally, the curriculum developed utilizes the adopted writing curriculum at Kodiak Island Borough School District and Kodiak Middle School (explained in further detail in Appendix A). I have seen this curriculum work in helping make writing instruction more tangible for students; at times it can also be formulaic to help struggling writers and English language learners. If a person is not familiar with the adopted writing curriculum, the resource list may not provide much assistance as it will for someone who is familiar.

And finally, I have seen Dr. Archer speak at several conferences and have used her methods within my classroom. Because of the success I have had with her techniques, I am a staunch supporter of explicit and direct instruction when introducing content to and instructing students. I balance this rigid form of teaching at the beginning of a unit with a more constructivist approach as students apply what they have learned to create a product of their own. I encourage students to select topics to write about that resonate with them; I sound like a broken record in my classroom when I encourage students to write about something they know a great deal about, something they are passionate about. Students are also welcome to read any book of their choice for my ELA class's reading homework. I know through experience that student choice leads to student engagement, buy-in, and, in effect, deep learning. However, I also know that teachers must guide students through initial learning to prepare them for the moments of wide-open choice to build their own understanding.

Methods for Curriculum Project

I created this project curriculum for a targeted population of roughly 150 eighth grade students in English Language Arts. These 150 students are present in my room throughout a day of six different roughly homogenous classes, and I will separate students into smaller working

collaborative groups. The setting is targeted for 8th grade ELA and Advanced English classes at Kodiak Middle School (KMS) of Kodiak Island Borough School District (KIBSD) in Kodiak, Alaska. To identify the smaller groups within the six different classes, I placed students based on their responses of student information so that each grouping has a representation from a variety of learning characteristics: Learning Styles Inventory, Lexile level, and the students' personal beliefs if they are a "leader" or a "team player". I wanted to offer enough variety so students could start to identify who they are as a learner, not something many have done by the time they reach 8th grade, but I also didn't want to give too many learner characteristics to make it unmanageable for me to equally make smaller homogenous groups. I attempted to create groups even with strong and struggling writers, a variety of learning styles, and an even number of leaders and passive students. My intent to have well-rounded groups to use each students' strengths and also to minimize potential behavior issues and personality conflicts.

In addition, many KMS students have families employed with the United States Coast Guard and are only with the district for a few short years, other students are new to the U.S. and enter KMS with limited English proficiency skills. Many students are of Alaska Native heritage (primarily Alutiiq). A majority of students are low-income and receive free and reduced lunches, and another group of students are from middle class to affluent families. By attempting to divide these varied groups, I hope each group will represent a variety of backgrounds, skills, perspectives, and language arts abilities.

The project will include one collaboratively-written composition for each group and one individually-written composition for each student in the informational writing genres of eighth grade ELA Alaska Standards: explanatory and argumentative. Each genre study will embed the

writing process with collaborative writing, researching, identifying credible and accurate sites and locating information on sites, paraphrasing and citing research, team work and cooperation, speaking and listening, correct grammar, specific and varied word choice and vocabulary. Each writing activity is a scaffolded step of composing to prepare students with practice to write an individual piece as the culmination for each genre unit of study.

As identified previously in this document, it is important I am certain that students reach proficiency of the 8th grade ELA standards. It is essential that teachers are scaffolding for students when working within students' ZPD through a gradual release of responsibility method. This gives students additional practice of the essential standards for eighth grade ELA. This project also intrinsically motivates students to work together on a topic of their choice to practice writing genres. The project will span two-thirds of a school year while students study eighth grade ELA standards. The other third of the year will address a third writing standard not used during this proposed unit: narrative. Suggestions for expanding this unit to include narrative writing techniques are provided in the reflection.

KIBSD Writing Curriculum Resources

In this project, I refer to multiple pieces and documents in the adopted writing curriculum at KIBSD. KIBSD utilizes *Step Up To Writing* to instruct our students K-12 in writing, as well as some reading skills. Because the entire district uses the same program, students move through the grades recognizing the same writing instruction vocabulary and writing structures from previous years. This allows us to stream-line the process of making stronger writers. In addition to *Step Up To Writing*, KIBSD works with writing coach Yolanda Westerberg who has given countless in-service presentations, staff meeting presentations, and teacher

conferences to improve our writing instruction. She, along with KIBSD, created our reference materials in KIBSD's *Common Ground* writing resources. *Common Ground* is a collaborative project between Mrs. Westerberg, KIBSD, and KIBSD's K-12 Literacy Team Representatives from each school. These resources are referred to throughout the writing process and not created by me. The intent of this curriculum is not to instruct how to use *Step Up To Writing* resources, but to apply an already familiar tool and curriculum.

Description of the Application Project

The current KMS eighth grade ELA scope and sequence identifies that students will first study the explanatory genre, followed by the argumentative genre, and finally personal narrative writing (not formally addressed in this project). Therefore, students will create their collaborative pieces in this same order. For each genre, the teacher will use *Step Up To Writing* organizational tools as well as *Common Ground* resources. The teacher in this curriculum model, by using the gradual release of responsibility model, will begin by giving students an example essay that meets expectations for the assigned essay students will write. Then, together as a whole class, focusing on another topic, students and the teacher will compose a similar essay together, mimicking the first example to meet expectations of content and structure. Then, students will work together in identified collaborative roles to create their group essay focused on their own PBE topic, but also working together to meet genre expectations of content and structure. Finally, students will culminate each writing unit of study with an individual essay again rising to assignment expectations practiced and scaffolded previously.

Beginning with the explanatory unit in October of semester one, students will identify a problem within their community their group believes is a concern to address; this is essential for a PBE philosophy: local and authentic. Because students at KMS come from a wide variety of backgrounds, the input of many will help identify a problem that is not only seen from the eyes of a local, but from someone new to the community as well. In the collaborative explanatory composition, students will sufficiently explain why it is a problem and why it needs solving. Students will research to further explain potential issues if the situation is not addressed in a timely manner. Researching will consist of local websites as well as interviewing local experts.

For the argumentative unit beginning in January of semester two, students will suggest a solution to the problem they outlined in the explanatory unit and identify the steps of how to make the proposed solution a reality. Students will do further research on their issue in this unit to identify a viable option for resolution. Again, having students from a variety of backgrounds around the country and world will allow students to offer suggestions on ways other communities resolved the same or similar issues.

Finally, the culminating final project in May is a short presentation where each small team of students presents their issue (problem and solution) in a presentation form of their choice: iMovie, Podcast, Speech, PowerPoint, Prezi, etc. Their audience is a local panel, board, council, or group of adults in the community that has some influence in addressing the issue the students identified. Inviting family, peers, and KMS administration and staff to attend and support students whenever possible is always a goal.

Plans for Dissemination

Collaboration between educators is a key part of professional development. When teachers share information, they can work together to team-teach content and create an interdisciplinary approach.

One way I will locally share my project is in a staff meeting with my peers at Kodiak Middle School on Friday, May 6th (hours before my graduating ceremony with Kodiak College). My principal agreed to put my presentation on the agenda for our faculty's early-out Friday afternoon staff meetings to share my curriculum with my peers. In addition, KIBSD has partnered with Alaska Association of School Boards (AASB) to focus on Community Engagement within our school in the coming years. I hope providing my peers with my ideas from this project and because they are working with AASB, teachers at KMS will have an example as well as continual support to engage our local community within our building. Furthermore, I will forward a copy of my curriculum plan to KIBSD's Curriculum Director, Mrs. Jennie Schauff, to use or distribute as she sees fit.

In the future, I would like to share this information with a larger audience, perhaps at an in-service or conference. My project covers the content areas of English Language Arts, writing, place-based, civic education, and embedded technology. Conferences with these focuses are potential places for me to share with other peers for a greater audience.

Not only is it important for me to share my information with others, but by doing so, I invite people to share their feedback and experiences with me. Opening a dialogue with my colleagues is the first step to improving my practice with my students. There is always room for

improvement in my practice, in this document, and in my classroom, and I am more than willing to field comments and suggestions for improvement.

Implementation and Reflection

To give an idea of how I implemented this unit, I will detail a regular day in class during this project. But first, some background as to how I organized my class and students so the days went smoothly. Every Monday, students selected new group roles (See Appendix B, pages 98-99) and kept those roles through Friday. The Materials Monitor role would collect the new week's point log (See Appendix B, page 102) and give it to the Recorder to identify the week and group. This weekly point log was always out and visible on a group's table—if students were on task, fulfilling individual role, and using an appropriate volume level, the team could earn a positive point. If they were doing the opposite, they would earn a negative point and the opportunity to earn the point back if they were refocused the next time I (or a classroom aide) came back by their table. I was always monitoring and moving around the classroom. While monitoring I looked for positive behaviors to give positive points, I listened to groups' discussions for points but also to make sure they were on track, I tried to locate tensions in groups and resolve the issue before they broke down and waived me over to settle a dispute, I monitored writing, I kept a close eye on my IEP and ELL students, and I also looked for any off-task screens. These days were busy days.

At the beginning of class, the Materials Monitor is responsible for getting their group folder; this folder kept all group papers so that nothing went in someone's binder. I wanted every group to be able to make progress even if someone was absent. Each student was responsible for getting and logging into their class computer and Word Online accounts by the

time attendance was over. When we first started with Word Online—the collaborative space—I gave students five minutes or so to play with the program. I wanted them to see what the program was capable of. I also wanted them to see how frustrating it would be for everyone to be typing on the same line. This set the tone of how to type on one document all at one. In an attempt to always incorporate social studies vocabulary, we discussed always typing on a different “latitude” than another partner. Students were amazed that this type of program existed. There was an buzzing excitement from the get-go. We had difficulty with any internet browser except Firefox, but once we passed that hurdle, thanks to the continual support of KIBSD’s IT team, most of the technology was flawless.

For each genre, one of the Recorders would create a “Divide and Conquer Research” document where students would identify who was responsible for researching which items, paraphrase their notes in a digital 2-column note (See Appendix B, page 102) document, and paste their URLs. When research was completed, another Recorder for each group would create a “Divide and Conquer Draft” document where students would identify who would draft which piece. There are five paragraphs in each essay, but a sixth role for Divide and Conquer was citations. Each group had a member who was responsible for using www.citationmachine.net to create their group’s citations; this person was then an expert helper when we began working on our individual essays and everyone had to cite at least one source.

As each student felt like their section in both the research and the drafting portion was completed, their task was to review what their group members were doing and identify who needed assistance in finding information or in drafting their paragraphs. Each drafted

paragraph had to have a minimum of three bolded sophisticated word choices (Common Core Tier II and Tier III words), one sentence variety (See Appendix B, page 78), and one elaboration (See Appendix B, pages 76-77). I often heard group members telling others, “You need another Tier II/III word bolded” or “You don’t have a sentence type yet” and other suggestions. They were always watching out for each other without jumping in and doing the work until that person explicitly identified they needed help. I found this interesting as this was not anything I had set out as a rule; students just seemed to naturally know that they couldn’t jump in on someone’s paragraph and do it for them.

When essays were drafted, the current Materials Monitor would get a check-sheet for the current genre to begin revising and editing (See Appendix B, pages 90 & 96). They reviewed everyone’s paragraphs and made further suggestions and comments regarding essays as a whole—one group asked permission if they could switch the order of their paragraphs around after reviewing it all. Of course they could! Strong writers became models for peers as everyone was able to see how others crafted their paragraphs, which words they selected to bold, what sentence types they created, and which elaborations they employed.

When essays were submitted to me, everyone self-assessed the entire essay on a rubric and submitted it singularly without discussing with the group. The scores students selected demonstrate a pride in their work and effort in the unit. Then, we would run through the unit again, but this time each student worked individually and selected their own topics. By doing this, students not only had my example to refer to, they also had their group essay to refer to if they became stuck or had questions.

When we began the presentation portion, students returned to their groups and began completing a storyboard. Students were asked to first storyboard a presentation that could be put on PowerPoint Online, but that once they had their information fleshed out on PowerPoint online, if they wanted to use a different presentation format, they certainly could do that. However, students did not take me up on that offer; everyone opted to complete a PowerPoint, which was fine.

Again, a group member created a final Divide and Conquer document identifying who would work on which slide, and then students began working on PowerPoint Online where they were able to see each other's slides. One student was responsible for putting all citations from previously written essays on a citation slide in addition to creating citations from URLs for images on slides. If Microsoft 365 was not a collaborative tool, I don't believe we would have been able to ask students to create such polished projects. If they weren't able to collaborate on a computer, they would have had to collaborate on paper, creating a presentation on paper or such. Microsoft 365 is a great addition to our tools at KIBSD.

So, a day in my class, one would see five groupings of desks with chairs facing each other. One student, the Materials Monitor, would be retrieving the group's folder from the folder bins and all other students would be grabbing their laptop from the cart and finding their group's table and logging into Word Online.

We would then pause for attendance. When beginning to review the agenda and CHAMPS, our school's behavior program, I ask the recorder to pull out their weekly point log and give themselves a point if their materials monitor had remembered to grab it, then I ask students to put their laptop lids at "half-mast" and remind them if anyone lifts their lid and

begins before we're ready, it's a negative point for the group. Then we would begin with a class warm-up related to our task, and jump into the unit with me saying "Lids up, please begin."

The first thing I do is keep track of what each group is doing by creating a simple matrix on my clipboard. I touch base with each group: "Group, if I may interrupt you for a moment and ask for everyone's attention, I'd like to touch base" (wait for all lids at half-mast again). "Yesterday, your group was completing _____. What are you working on today?" Students would identify who was where in their projects and where they were headed. We discussed any one-on-one questions for their group, I asked them if there was anything else I could do for them or any questions before I left. If they were making making progress, I often gave them a positive point on their point log. Then, I moved on to the next group and repeat. By doing this, I tried to keep students accountable of moving forward, but I also wanted to keep track of each group's progress and it would have been possible to have remembered all of this information without writing it down.

Once I checked in with each group, I moved around the classroom the rest of the period answering questions, monitoring volume and behavior, assisting students compose emails to local experts, redirecting dead-end research, and more. I certainly had my fair share of off-task students, they are 8th graders after all, but for the most part, their level of engagement for the unit was higher than I had seen previously. It could have been the level of choice, but it could have also been that each person had a role to fill each day in their researching and writing unlike reading units where it is easier to slide on others' coattails.

One item of note is that the timeline set out for the implementation of this unit is based on my learning experience with my initial trial of this unit in my classroom. I attempted it with

a different timeline—pushing the whole unit into semester two rather than a year-long activity—and propose a timeline I think more effective. At the time of submitting this document, students are preparing and items are falling in to place, but the first one is not scheduled for another week. I had so many moving pieces this year (new curriculum expectations and cross-curricular unit expectations) that I had to make this unit fit with administrative decisions; however, if I had my druthers, I would spread this unit over the course of a year and implement in the time frame given.

I learned a great deal during this project alongside my students. I had to be okay with letting go and allowing the students' research and questions determine where they went with their essays. They selected their research topics, their community members to interview, their resources, what their essays would focus on, their solutions, and who they would present to and what manner of presentation it would be. While I am a staunch supporter of giving students choice to create buy-in and engagement, I will make changes to this for next year.

One change I will certainly make is limiting the amount of topics students are researching. I had six class periods, each containing three to five groups of five to six students per group. Because I gave each group free choice to select their topic, there were 15 different research projects ongoing in my classroom. This made for a great breadth of topics, and I found that I struggled to keep up with the students. With 17 different topics, finding quality online resources for each local topic was challenging.

Category of Issues	Topics Selected (several groups selected the same topic)
Marine Debris	-Beach-cleanups due to debris -Compostable bags to replace plastic bags contributing to marine debris

City of Kodiak Parks & Recreation Issues	-Teen Center Revitalization -Skate Park Enclosure Needed -Lack of Teen Activities in Kodiak
Trash & Recycling	-Littering and Illegal Dumping -Recycling in Kodiak
KMS Issues #1 Administration-related	-KMS Dress Code Updates -KMS Colors & Artwork in Hallways -KMS & Rural Student Connections
KMS Issues #2 Counseling-related	-KMS Respect & Tolerance Lessons -KMS Courses Offerings -Teen Drug Abuse in Kodiak
City of Kodiak	-High Cost of Living -More Tourism Needed -Crosswalk Near Schools Needed

Many students located national online resources to use for their local issue instead. By limiting the issues, students in different groups and classes could potentially share data they collect with other groups to allow for more depth on a subject than breadth. It would certainly allow for guest speakers to present, rather than expert-source research limited to phone calls and emails; in-person research was the goal, but it became impossible to invite a professional in when only one group in just a few of my classes were focusing on that topic. Therefore, I would suggest asking students to brainstorm multiple topics, coming up with a final 5-10 choices, and asking students to select from that. I think having a limited amount of options for research would make presentations more streamlined—ask professionals into the school for the day for student presentations.

Another aspect I would modify is the introduction of group roles and the weekly point log. In the past, these have been staples from day one, but because of the changes to my classes this year, I did not introduce them to students until we started the collaborative unit. I

think that if I can introduce them earlier in the year and give students time to practice the roles and discuss group work, that by the time we start this unit, we'll be done practicing and ready to apply collaborative skills. Some group members became very frustrated with off-task group members and I think additional practice would be helpful for all

As a success, though, using Word Online for students to collaborate during the research and then in the writing process was a positive experience; it really led to the success of this unit. Word Online is similar to Google Drive in that it allows the simultaneous collaboration online. This allowed students to work together to compile their research into one location and identify who was struggling and who was finding great information, including which websites they used. It also allowed students to verify if their partners were paraphrasing; self-policing and identifying paraphrased work versus copy/pasted work improved their own paraphrasing and made learning the skill relevant. After the research, they were able to then collaborate and write their essay together and view how their essay was taking shape. They were able to peer-conference with their group members on a daily basis, make suggestions to each other, and help with corrections because they had access to the entire document in real-time.

Throughout the unit, students were asked to reflect on different parts of the process, and the students' responses to this project were insightful. Their responses in their reflections mirrored some of my own thoughts about adapting the unit the next time I use it:

What was a positive experience from the group writing assignment and why?

-One positive experience that came out of this group assignment was that we each learned a little more about functioning properly as a group. Lessons such as this will later prove to be essential, so it was a useful project.

-One thing that was positive that our group did was working together while we all were revising/editing. I think this because we found all the dead words and replaced tier 1 words with tier 2 and 3 words.

-I got the chance to write and work with people that I never really got the chance to work with.

-I thought the idea of you giving us an opportunity to talk to someone about the project we were working on was helpful because it not only helped us with our questions, but it also helped us how to make a call professionally.

-A positive experience was learning and examining how other students took notes and drafted their parts of the essay.

What did not go well during the group writing assignment and why do you think that was?

-The thing that didn't go really well was when we had hard time searching for information.

-One thing that didn't go well while we were working on our essay was not being able to wrap some of the text around our image. The picture made our format a little messy and we couldn't fix it.

-Nothing really went wrong, it was just that sometimes we would mess around and laugh a lot. Our volume level would sometimes go to a 3 because of the laughing and talking.

-Yes sometimes we might have gotten off topic, but we usually realized that and got back to work. Being on track was hard for everyone but we didn't get our work done and when we realized that we got back to work and focused.

-I think there were points in time where one person was taking on more of a workload than their peers, and other times in which all but one individual was working diligently, whilst that person goofed off.

What did Miss Cassidy do that you thought was helpful for your group to make progress?

- I liked that Miss Cassidy implemented a point system to help motivate us to stay on task.
- She gave us links to go to so we could find answers for our research essay. And she helped us find people to contact so we could talk to them and ask questions.
- She walked around the class a lot and was asking questions to us. And she was giving us good suggestions.
- She helped us with whom to contact and resources that we could use.
- Miss Cassidy helped us get a few resources, contact experts, and work through frustrations with the computer.

What can Miss Cassidy do next time to help your group make progress?

- Maybe give more suggestions on good, reliable websites that could assist us in our research and ensure we are getting accurate information.
- Have us more spread out from other groups because it's hard to hear my group when we're talking about our writing project.
- Miss Cassidy can make sure that all the group is putting in an effort.
- Miss Cassidy should probably do what she did for this project next time because it worked really well.
- Next time, to help my group, Miss Cassidy might try to spend a little more time with us, not that I feel she didn't spend enough time with us, but the more the merrier.

What did you learn or increase understanding about during the research project?

- I learned a lot about teen drug abuse and all the terrible things about it, but I also learned more about working collaboratively as a group.

-I learned how to write an email and sound professional. I also learned a few ways to make sentences sound less elementary.

-During the research project I didn't learn a lot more about our topic, but I really learned a lot about the more technical stuff: formal writing, collaborating in a group, and writing emails and other media more formally.

-The most important thing I learned while doing this project was that there is a program that allows multiple people to type at once.

-That working with a group is fun and we help each other out if we get stuck on something.

What is your opinion about working in a group on an essay type and then later working individually on the same essay type again?

-I personally preferred it because it showed me exactly what to do and how to be ready when I do the individual.

-I preferred the group; I think it is better, because if you need help you can ask a peer.

-I preferred doing the group work first, and then moving on to the individual work. This is because I got to practice, and get help from my peers before moving on to the more difficult individual work. During the second essay, we were much better at communicating with each other, and we were considerably more efficient.

-I liked the group and then the individual because it helped us see what we had to do and gave us a bigger reference. We know that it had not just been seen by the writer but also by other people and gave us more of an opinion and other eyes on our writing.

-I would prefer the individual essays first and then the group essay second because after our individual essays, we would do better in our group essays and we would more prepared with our ideas.

Any other comments? Can be about the assignment, the task, the process, the groups, etc. Ask any questions, make any suggestions, submit any concerns.

-The communication went well in my group; we all knew what we were going to be doing.

-I really liked my group and would like to work with them again sometime.

-I would like to be with a group where everyone one is serious about their work because their work will affect my grade and my group members that are working.

-I would say one frustrating thing that happened to my group was that a student was out sick for a couple days and when they returned they did not try very hard to work fast.

-I loved my group!

Many of the students' responses reflected my thoughts of the unit: not enough credible websites for some topics to find local sources, so they researched at the national or global level; some groups were not meshing well some days; students' writing abilities were growing quickly; the daily points for group behavior was helping motivate some students to stay on task or remind their group members to stay focused; and that Microsoft 365's Word Online was allowing students to have an incredibly powerful educational experience through collaborating.

Some specific examples I saw of improvement was one of behavior in one particular student. This student was chatty with neighbors or other off-task behavior that often required redirecting. During this unit, I was certain to place this student in a group of model peers, and the results were amazing. This student's level of maturity, focus, dedication to his work grew

immensely. In fact, because he is in my largest and therefore loudest class, and because this group demonstrated their ability to be on task and complete assignments so well, this group earned my trust to leave the classroom and work at the tables just down the hall from my class—close enough to keep an eye on, but far enough away that trust was required to go there.

Another specific example is one particular student who is an English Language Learner, but on monitoring status, and who was exited from our Special Education's ELA support class and joined my 8th grade ELA class mid-year. This student is still on an IEP and is still developing English skills. He joined a group who already had a topic selected when he came into my class, but he never complained about working with them. His group did an amazing job taking him into their team, as if he had been there all along and made sure to give him tasks in the Divide & Conquers that he was comfortable completing. He immediately asked questions when he became stuck and came out at the end of the unit incredibly proud of his contributions to the group. Although shy and quiet when he first joined us, he now has a voice in his group. Although he had never completed an essay on his own previously, he completed his argumentative individual essay almost completely by himself doing the researching and writing.

In addition, the time it took my classes to write an essay from selecting a topic to submitting the final draft has never, ever in my nine years of teaching, been as fast as the individual argumentative essay. Within two weeks, 75% of students completed the essay. By the end of the third week, 90% of students had completed their essay while the early finishers completed extension activities. The final 10% joined me in our Tutorial time (similar to a homeroom) to complete their essays with more one-on-one assistance, but these 10% do not

fit neatly into a label such as IEP, ELL, behavior-program student, etc. The last 10% come from a variety of backgrounds and ran into issues along the way such as absences with sports traveling, extended Spring Breaks, two students with broken arms, reluctant writers, etc. When students were able to practice a writing genre in such depth as they did, they really are able to recreate the individual essay with more competence and confidence the second time around.

When it came to grading, for the group essay, I only assessed for the Standard W1 & W2 as a whole rather than breaking down the standards into the a-f sub-standards, as I did in the individual essay. Although I definitely want students to work together and collaborate together, I don't want a group work score to drastically change a student's grade. My district uses standards-based grading, so every score should be linked to the student's skills. I want the group grade to be reflected, but not a deciding factor in a student's overall score. The group essay is also a step in scaffolding rather than a full assessment like the individual essay. When it came to the individual essay, all sub-standards were assessed and it had a much stronger effect on students' class grades.

Potential Adaptations

If one desired to expand this unit to include narrative writing (Alaska Writing Standard W3), I have several ideas. One is to compose fictional narratives. First, they could create a narrative that examines the issue from an eighth grader's perspective—a character will interact with the problem identified in the original explanatory essay, which will have a significant consequence on their life. A paired narrative will look at the same character who lived a life without facing the issue and how their life was preferable because the community kept the narrative's character from interacting with the negative force and implemented the solution

students suggested in their argumentative piece. Another idea is a personal narrative: the student shares about a moment they experienced that led them to identify the issue in their research topic and the ending reflection piece of the narrative would reflect on their current research.

Another suggestion is the use of Project Citizen (www.civiced.org/programs/project-citizen) as a resource for guiding student research. This source was suggested by my advisors who were familiar with the program and supported it highly. I decided to use it as a reference rather than a guide in my process because I had found Hung's (2008) article (detailed above) and was already prepared to move forward with it and because I was ready to start the research unit with my students and did not feel like I had time built in to switch gears to become familiar with and use Project Citizen the way it was intended. However, I did refer to it multiple times over the course of my research project with my students and I look forward to employing more of Project Citizen in the future.

Both of these items I will consider next year as I implement this unit for a second time.

Conclusion

I separated the unit presented in the appendices section into four parts: explanatory genre, argumentative genre, presentation of final product, and resources—some are mine, others are *Step Up to Writing's*. I learned a great deal during the unit and I hope to continue to learn with my students every year I implement place-based learning opportunities in the ELA classroom.

Appendix A:

Curriculum Product: Place-Based Informational & Collaborative Writing Unit in the 8th Grade English Language Arts Classroom

Kodiak Island Borough School District Mission Statement

The KIBSD, in close cooperation with our diverse island community, exists to provide an educational program of the highest standard that empowers all students to achieve personal and academic excellence while developing their full potential as responsible, productive citizens.

Kodiak Middle School Vision

Through shared responsibility with the community, KMS will create a safe, healthy, collaborative learning environment that addresses the academic, social, and emotional needs of early adolescents through high expectations, a variety of course offerings, and cultural sensitivity. Students are empowered to acquire knowledge and skills necessary to become lifelong learners and productive members of society.

Explanatory Unit

8th Place-based Collaborative Research Writing Unit, Part I: Explanatory	
Readiness Standards—Students come to 8th grade writing class prepared to:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss explanatory writing with a common vocabulary from previous grades, • Write an explanatory piece with previous experience within the genre, • Use the school-wide adopted template for explanatory writing, • Use technology to produce and publish writing, 	
Enduring Understandings of Content	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is an issue in my local community and how can my peers and I propose a solution? 	
Enduring Understandings of Writing Process	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will working in a small group help me improve my own writing and my peers' writing? • How will informal research improve my understanding of a topic? • How can I analyze resources to locate appropriate sources for research? 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will a variety of elaborations make my writing stronger and more supported? • How can higher-level vocabulary (Tier II & III) words improve the quality of my writing? • How can a variety of sentence types in my writing improve the quality of my writing? • How will reviewing a peer's writing help me improve my own composing skills? • How can technology assist me throughout the writing process—during research, planning, composing, and publishing specifically?
Established Learning Goals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write an explanatory piece appropriate to task and audience at the 8th grade level.
Established Learning Objectives—Students will:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create an introduction paragraph • Create a thesis • Compose a well-structured essay • Create a conclusion paragraph • Identify support and elaboration on topic • Utilize academic vocabulary • Create multiple sentence types and use within essay • Peer conference with a peer to locate errors within essay • Use technology throughout the writing process to improve composition, to facilitate conferencing, and to publish. • Collaborate with peers to strengthen own understanding of research and explanatory writing
Instructional Strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explicit direct instruction of specific skills and multiple examples • Group work for practice • Partner work for review • Individual work for assessment • Academic games to review smaller skills • Entrance Pass • Exit Ticket • Kinesthetic movement activities • Warm-ups • Reviewing model/exemplar assignments • Assessing model/exemplar assignments with assignment rubric • Self-assessment with assignment rubric • Self-assess on personal growth • Assess teacher on teaching differing pieces
Differentiation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify different expectations for a standards Based score of a 1 (beginner), 2 (developing), 3 (proficient), and 4 (advanced) for differing activities on rubric • Re-teaching skills for 1 & 2 scoring level students—small group/whole group. • Challenge activities for 3 & 4 scoring level students—small group or individual.
Standards

<i>Alaska 8th Grade Standards</i>
<i>Writing Standards, Text Types of Purposes</i>
<p>2) Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information into broader categories; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension; b. Develop the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples; c. Use appropriate and varied transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts; d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic; e. Establish and maintain a formal style; f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.
<i>Writing Standards, Production and Distribution of Writing</i>
<p>4) Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)</p> <p>5) With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1–3 up to and including grade 8.)</p> <p>6) Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and present the relationships between information and ideas efficiently as well as to interact and collaborate with others.</p> <p>7) Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.</p> <p>8) Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.</p>
<i>Alaska Cultural Standards</i>
<p>A) Culturally-responsive educators incorporate local ways of knowing and teaching in their work.</p> <p>B) Culturally-responsive educators use the local environment and community resources on a regular basis to link what they are teaching to the everyday lives of the students.</p> <p>E) Culturally-responsive educators recognize the full educational potential of each student and provide the challenges necessary for each of them to achieve that potential</p>
<i>National Council of Teachers of English Standards</i>

- 5) Students employ a wide range of strategies as they write and use different writing process elements appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes.
- 6) Students apply knowledge of language structure, language conventions (e.g., spelling and punctuation), media techniques, figurative language, and genre to create, critique, and discuss print and non-print texts.
- 7) Students conduct research on issues and interests by generating ideas and questions, and by posing problems. They gather, evaluate, and synthesize data from a variety of sources (e.g., print and non-print texts, artifacts, people) to communicate their discoveries in ways that suit their purpose and audience.
- 8) Students use a variety of technological and information resources (e.g., libraries, databases, computer networks, video) to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge.

Evidence of Learning

- Improved score over time on standards, recorded on Student Learning Plans
- Formative assessments
- Increased scoring between pre and post assessment
- Student self-assessment
- Entrance and Exit tickets
- Reflection on Enduring Understandings throughout the unit

Evaluation plan for Student Learning

- Explanatory Rubric given to students
- Peers evaluate partner on the rubric
- Students will self-evaluate a final product using the rubric
- Teacher uses the same rubric to evaluate student
- Reflection on Enduring Understandings throughout the unit

Evaluation plan for Curriculum

- Student performance on district common pre and post assessments for explanatory genre study.
- Student performance on explanatory post assessment
- Student evaluation of Explanatory Unit.

Explanation of Terms

- *Explanatory*: Students writing a nonfiction text not using narration, only exposition.
- *Writing Process*: The steps students work through to produce a piece of writing: brainstorming, planning, drafting, revising, editing, publishing
- *Entrance Tickets*: Formative, informal assessment at the beginning of a class
- *Exit Tickets*: Formative, informal assessment at the end of class for students to self-assess

Explanatory Unit Overview

Explanatory Collaborative Unit Overview			
Lesson #*	Activity Description	Student Learning Objective Students Will...	Resources
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Give overview of Place-based collaborative writing unit -Introduce Explanatory Portion -Review exemplar explanatory essay (positive and negative exemplars) -Assess with explanatory rubric 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Comprehend overview of entire unit -Identify standards for explanatory portion -Assess exemplar models with rubric to identify positive examples and negative non-examples 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Explanatory rubric -Example Explanatory Research Essay
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Credible sites for research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Identify what makes a website credible or not 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Credible or Not worksheet -Moodle Discussion Forum
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Paraphrasing; reviewing examples and practice -Connect paraphrasing practice to sentence variety practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -paraphrase websites correctly -paraphrase information into sentence variety examples 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Sentence Variety -Plagiarism PowerPoint -Elaboration types document
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Introduce community issue -Assign collaborative groups -Introduce group work rubric -Want vs. need in community -Students select top 3 choices and begin 2-column notes for issue parameters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Identify a community issue that needs a resolution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -2-column notes -Group Role Sheet -Group Work Rubric -Group Work Weekly Point Log
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Divide & Conquer explanatory research: students divvy up research needs and use credible sites to locate information; paraphrase information on collaborative platform like Word Online or Google Drive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Identify their own focus for research -Identify credible sites -Paraphrase relevant information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -2-column notes
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Divide & Conquer Explanatory Essay: students will assign each member in the group 1 part of the essay. Essay portion does not necessarily relate to research focus. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Identify information from group research to use to write -Draft assigned portion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Essay/paragraph requirements www.citationmachine.net]
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Revise and Edit as a group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Revise and edit entire essay together using the check-list 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Check-list of items for revising and editing
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Submit essay and self-assess on rubric 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Self-assess entire essay on rubric 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Additional copies of explanatory rubric
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Individual Explanatory essay 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Complete Writing process over on an individual topic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Same as used previously

Explanatory Lesson Plans

Lesson 1: Introduce Unit and Examples
Time Suggested: 1-2 45-minute classes
Objectives—Students will:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehend overview of entire unit • Identify standards for explanatory portion • Assess exemplar models with rubric to identify positive examples and negative non-examples
Standards:
Supports W.8.2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content
Procedures:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Anticipatory Set: Free Write—Agree or disagree with the statement and why? <i>People under the age of 18 are not important community citizens. They are minors and therefore do not have the right to share opinions and ideas about problems in a community until they are working adults, nor do they have anything they can offer to improve a community until they are a working adult.</i> 2. Introduce overview of unit: explanatory essay and argumentative essay to follow studying skills, group-writing, independent writing assessment about a problem in the community and a solution; present problem and solution to a group of local adults that can use the ideas to make changes. 3. Pass out Explanatory Rubric: Identify skills and standards for the unit will focus on for student learning. 4. Pass out example essay: Read and annotate essay, discussing positives and negatives, analyzing for style. 5. Then, assess the essay with the explanatory rubric. 6. Debrief: Exit Pass—what are two key aspects that make up a quality explanatory essay? Rate yourself 1-4 how you feel about doing each one using what you know now without further instruction
Materials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explanatory Rubric, Appendix B, page 84 • Example Explanatory Research Essay, Appendix B, 85-88

Lesson 2: Credible or Not?
Time Suggested: One 45-minute class
Objectives—Students will:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify characteristics of credible websites and when to be wary of a site’s information Analyze two websites for their credible or not characteristics and submit a written piece on class Moodle Forum explaining their findings.
Standards:
W.8.8: Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.
Procedures:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Anticipatory Set: Quick-write: <i>How do you know when a website has credible information or not?</i> Then Give one, Get one x2 (find a partner with a different idea, and share one of your ideas; do this twice so they have two new ideas before they share). Call on students to share out ideas. Pass out <i>Credible or Not?</i> Side 1 of the document to begin discussion. Discuss what they already identified that is on the list and what they missed. What do the different endings mean? Flip to side 2 of <i>Credible or Not?</i> students go to websites listed. Students analyze the two websites for their credibility based on what was discussed on side 1 of the document. Then, ask students to write 1-2 paragraphs in class Moodle forum explaining which site is credible and why and which is not and why. Students write a response on peers’ posts. Debrief: Exit pass: Rate yourself 1-4 on how you feel you can do identifying if a site is credible or not?
Materials
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Credible or Not?</i> guiding worksheet, Appendix B, page 73-74 Student computers and Moodle writing forum

Lesson 3: Paraphrasing
Time Suggested: One 45-minute classes
Objectives—Students will:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define <i>plagiarism</i> • Identify how to paraphrase • Actively practice paraphrasing between sentence types
Standards:
W.8.8: Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.
Procedures:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Anticipatory Set: Think, write, pair, share--<i>What does plagiarism mean? How do researchers avoid it when using information from a textbook or website? Rate yourself 1-4 how you think you can paraphrase a text before further instruction based on your "write" portion of your paper.</i> 2. Review <i>Plagiarism</i> PowerPoint; students take 2-column notes 3. Practice paraphrasing with <i>as I do, we do, y'all do, you do.</i> 4. Teacher-selects text accessible to current students with high engagement. Teacher models reading, annotating, and paraphrasing a small paragraph, focusing on sentence types in <i>I do</i> method. 5. Then teacher includes students for <i>We do</i> method of selecting another section of text, reading, annotating, and paraphrasing while focusing on sentence types. 6. Then, for <i>Y'all do</i>, students work in small groups or pairs to repeat reading, annotating, and paraphrasing a text. 7. Finally, students complete the <i>I do</i> portion and read, annotate, paraphrase on their own to gauge their learning. Students should pair up with previous partner and share their paraphrasing. 8. Debrief: Exit pass--<i>Rate yourself 1-4 how confident you are to avoid plagiarism without depending on quotes. What is one key piece of advice you would tell someone who rated themselves lower than you?</i>
Materials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plagiarism PowerPoint, Appendix B, page 75 • Two-Column notes, Appendix B, 81 & 82 • Sentence Variety examples, Appendix B, page 78 • Teacher selected example text to use for paraphrasing practice, Appendix B, page 75

Lesson 4: Community Issue—what's yours?

Time Suggested: One 45-minute class

Objectives—Students will:

- Identify their collaborative groups for the year.
- Comprehend needs vs. wants
- Identify and come to a consensus in group about 2-3 community issues that need a resolution

Standards:

- W.8.5: 5. With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.
- W.8.8: Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.

Procedures:

1. **Anticipatory Set:** What are three major problems in our community, that affect a large amount of people?
 - a. Students share ideas with class and teacher compiles list of possible topics
 - b. Then, discuss wants vs. needs (what we wish we had here, vs. what our community is lacking that hurts a certain population). Eliminate “wants” from generated topic list. Accept any additional ideas for “needs.”
2. Identify student groups and, if assigning seats, group tables.
 - a. Preface with appropriate and respectful response to group members
 - b. Introduce Group Role Sheet—each member will have a job every day that rotates every week.
 - c. Introduce Group Work weekly point log—point logs can earn teams small tokens at the end of the week. The more on-task and appropriate work being done, the more positive points a group can earn.
3. Students decide out of compiled needs list, which are their top 1, 2, & 3 they want to research. Need to be certain the topics will fit project parameters. Students complete following activity to vet their topics.
 - a. When they have 1-3 choices, create 2-column notes. Start with #1 choice:
 - i. Key Ideas for each one: What is the problem? Who does it affect? Why is this a problem/who contributes to problem in the community? Who are the local experts? Does it have a solution that we can work towards in ELA class?
 - ii. Students create the elaborations for the key idea questions.
 - b. Ask students to get checked off if they think project topic 2-column notes are sufficient to match project. If not, move to 2nd choice and repeat.
 - c. Teacher monitors class and scores groups on Weekly Point Log
4. Circulate, monitor, and award positive and negative points.

5. Debrief: Self-assess; submit exit pass with student's own daily score of 1-4, with at least 1 sentence citing specific activities during the day why they earned that score.
Materials
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Group Role Sheet, Appendix B, pages 79-80• Group Work Weekly Point Log, Appendix B, page 83

Lesson 5: Explanatory Research Divide & Conquer
Time Suggested: 3 45-minute class periods
Objectives—Students will:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify who is researching which piece of the essay Identify credible sites for their research Paraphrase credible sites into 2-column notes on Word Online
Standards:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> W.8.5: With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed. W.8.8: Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.
Procedures:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Anticipatory Set: Review digital 2-column notes set up. Identify how to complete 2-column notes for divide & conquer research—what are the key ideas and what are the elaborations. Every student should identify one item related to issue topic they are researching. Every student should paste URL for websites used on divide & conquer document so a citation may be made later. Assist students in divide & conquer and checking for paraphrasing. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Remind students about URLs for websites used. Circulate, monitor, and award positive and negative points. Debrief: Exit pass—Students select one to respond to: <i>What worked well? What did you learn about? What did you struggle with?</i>
Materials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student computers Digital 2-column notes, Appendix B, page page 82

Lesson 6: Divide & Conquer Explanatory Essay Drafting
Time Suggested: 3 45-minute class periods
Objectives—Students will:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use paraphrased research information to draft explanatory essay • Collaborate on essay draft—identify who is responsible for which section and assisting peers
Standards:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • W.8.2a-f: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content; a. Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information into broader categories; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension; b. Develop the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples; c. Use appropriate and varied transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts; d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic; e. Establish and maintain a formal style; f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented. • W.8.5: With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.
Procedures:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Anticipatory Set: <i>Step Up To Writing</i> Sentence types warm-up; select sentence type not yet reviewed, or reviewed weeks ago and students may need refresher. 2. Review structure of an explanatory essay studied previously. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Ask students to pull out example explanatory essay and rubric used to assess essay previously. Use as a model for student writing. b. Pass out sheet with <i>Step Up To Writing</i> colors and reminders of essay structure 3. Students create new Word Online document and set up Divide & Conquer for essay draft <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Students use information from research document to create essay b. Each student assigned 1 paragraph (intro, reason 1, reason 2, reason 3, conclusion) or 1 student to create citations from all research URLs using www.citationmachine.net 4. Circulate, monitor, and award positive and negative points. 5. Debrief: Exit pass--<i>What is going well? What do you need further assistance/lessons on from Miss Cassidy?</i>
Materials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explanatory Essay Rubric, Appendix B, page 84 • Explanatory Essay layout reminder, Appendix B, page 89 • Student computers

Lesson 7: Revisions and Editing
Time Suggested: 2 45-minute class periods
Objectives—Students will:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revise and edit group’s essay using essay check-list • Assist struggling peers with revising
Standards:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • W.8.2a-f: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content; a. Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information into broader categories; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension; b. Develop the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples; c. Use appropriate and varied transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts; d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic; e. Establish and maintain a formal style; f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented. • W.8.5: With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.
Procedures:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Anticipatory Set: Materials monitor passes out Essay Revision Checklist for each member in group. Review revision check-list with students. Identify that all items from essay are on the checklist to make sure students remembered to include all required elements. 2. Students revise group’s complete essay, not just their paragraphs. Make comments to group members to encourage student revising of paragraphs. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Circulate, monitor, and award positive and negative points. 3. Debrief: Presenters share out tips for others: <i>What is one thing your group thinks your group is doing well in the essay process and how are you demonstrating this proficiency?</i>
Materials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explanatory Essay Revision Check-sheet, Appendix B, page 90 • Student computers

Lesson 8: Self-assess and essay submission
Time Suggested:
Objectives—Students will:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-assess using rubric and identify essay’s level of proficiency • Self-assess for personal performance during unit
Standards:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • W.8.5: With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed. • S&L.8.1b: Follow rules for collegial discussions (e.g., establishing norms: taking turns, paraphrasing, respecting diverse viewpoints), and decision-making (e.g., coming to consensus), track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.
Procedures:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Anticipatory Set: <i>Think, Write, Move, Pair, Share—what is more important: self-assessment, peer assessment, or teacher assessment? You may select something in between or a combination.</i> Students think, then write a response. Identify where students move in the room based on opinion. Then each group shares a few ideas with each other; identify if anyone moves spots. Then share out with the whole class. Identify again if anyone moves to a new location. Can the class come to consensus? 2. Everyone needs additional Explanatory Essay Rubric. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Self-assess on essay rubric and submit. b. 1 person in group submits essay final draft. 3. Debrief: Self-assess 1-4 on your personal behavior for this unit, standard S&L1b—working with a group, completing individual roles, and respecting the ideas of others: <i>How did you do and why?</i>
Materials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explanatory essay rubric, Appendix B, page 84

Lesson 9: Repeat Explanatory Process working individually
Time Suggested: 2 weeks of 45-minute classes to repeat full writing process of planning, organizing, drafting, revising, publishing.
Objectives—Students will:
Write an explanatory essay using writing process individually
Standards:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> W.8.2a-f: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content; a. Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information into broader categories; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension; b. Develop the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples; c. Use appropriate and varied transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts; d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic; e. Establish and maintain a formal style; f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented. W.8.5: With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.
Procedures:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Repeat explanatory essay writing process individually 2. Students select a topic to research (may be a great time to work with grade-level team member to focus on another classes' topic (example: social studies or science). 3. Students identify what they need to identify—key ideas on 2-column research notes. (get checked off) 4. Students research and paraphrase info as elaborations on 2-column notes 5. Draft essay based on paraphrased notes and make citations for research 6. Students peer-conference. 7. Students revise and edit. 8. Students submit essay with self-assessed rubric.
Materials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All materials and documents listed above, Appendix B, pages 73-90

Argumentative Unit

8th Place-based Collaborative Research Writing Unit, Part II: Argumentative	
Readiness Standards—Students come to 8th grade writing class prepared to:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss argumentative writing with a common vocabulary from previous grades. • Write an argumentative piece with previous experience within the genre. • Use the school-wide adopted template for argumentative writing. • Use technology to produce and publish writing. 	
Enduring Understandings of Content	
What is an issue in my local community and how can my peers and I propose a solution?	
Enduring Understandings of Writing Process	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will identifying my interests assist me in argumentative writing? • How will working in a small group help me improve my own writing and my peers' writing? • How will informal research improve my understanding of a topic? • How can I analyze resources to locate appropriate sources for research? • How will a variety of elaborations make my writing stronger and more supported? • How can higher-level vocabulary (Tier II & III) words improve the quality of my writing? • How can a variety of sentence types in my writing improve the quality of my writing? • How can refuting my opposition strengthen my own argument? • How will reviewing a peer's writing help me improve my own composing skills? • How can technology assist me throughout the writing process—during research, planning, composing, and publishing specifically? 	
Established Learning Goals	
Write an argumentative piece appropriate to task and audience at the 8 th grade level.	
Established Learning Objectives—Students will:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create an introduction paragraph • Create a claim • Compose a well-structured essay • Create a counterargument paragraph that provides a concession and a rebuttal • Create a conclusion paragraph • Identify support and elaboration on topic • Utilize academic vocabulary • Create multiple sentence types and use within essay • Peer conference with a peer to locate errors within essay • Use technology throughout the writing process to improve composition, to facilitate conferencing, and to publish. • Collaborate with peers to strengthen own understanding of research and explanatory writing 	
Instructional Strategies	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explicit direct instruction of specific skills and multiple examples 	

- Group work for practice
- Partner work for review
- Individual work for assessment
- Academic games to review smaller skills
- Entrance Pass
- Exit Ticket
- Kinesthetic movement activities
- Warm-ups
- Reviewing model/exemplar assignments
- Assessing model/exemplar assignments with assignment rubric
- Self-assessment with assignment rubric
- Self-assess on personal growth
- Assess teacher on teaching differing pieces
- Student grade recording on Standards Based Grading—Student Learning Plan

Differentiation

- Identify different expectations for a standards Based score of a 1 (beginner), 2 (developing), 3 (proficient), and 4 (advanced) for differing activities on rubric
- Re-teaching skills for 1 & 2 scoring level students—small group/whole group.
- Challenge activities for 3 & 4 scoring level students—small group or individual.

Standards

Alaska 8th Grade Standards

Writing Standards, Text Types of Purposes

1. Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence;
 - a. Introduce claim(s), acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically;
 - b. Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and accurate, relevant evidence, using credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text;
 - c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence;
 - d. Establish and maintain a formal style;
 - e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.

Writing Standards, Production and Distribution of Writing

- 4) Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)
- 5) With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1–3 up to and including grade 8.)
- 6) Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and present the relationships between information and ideas efficiently as well as to interact and collaborate

with others.

7) Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.

8) Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.

Alaska Cultural Standards

A) Culturally-responsive educators incorporate local ways of knowing and teaching in their work.

B) Culturally-responsive educators use the local environment and community resources on a regular basis to link what they are teaching to the everyday lives of the students.

E) Culturally-responsive educators recognize the full educational potential of each student and provide the challenges necessary for each of them to achieve that potential

National Council of Teachers of English Standards

5) Students employ a wide range of strategies as they write and use different writing process elements appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes.

6) Students apply knowledge of language structure, language conventions (e.g., spelling and punctuation), media techniques, figurative language, and genre to create, critique, and discuss print and non-print texts.

7) Students conduct research on issues and interests by generating ideas and questions, and by posing problems. They gather, evaluate, and synthesize data from a variety of sources (e.g., print and non-print texts, artifacts, people) to communicate their discoveries in ways that suit their purpose and audience.

8) Students use a variety of technological and information resources (e.g., libraries, databases, computer networks, video) to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge.

Evidence of Learning

- Improved score over time on standards, recorded on Student Learning Plans
- Formative assessments
- Increased scoring between pre and post assessment
- Student self-assessment
- Entrance and Exit tickets
- Reflection on Enduring Understandings throughout the unit

Evaluation plan for Student Learning

- Explanatory Rubric given to students
- Peers evaluate partner on the rubric
- Students will self-evaluate a final product using the rubric
- Teacher uses the same rubric to evaluate student
- Reflection on Enduring Understandings throughout the unit

Evaluation plan for Curriculum

- Student performance on district common pre and post assessments for argumentative genre study.
- Student performance on argumentative post assessment
- Student evaluation of Argumentative Unit.

Explanation of Terms

- *Argumentative*: Students arguing a claim to convince the audience of their claim.
- *Writing Process*: The steps students work through to produce a piece of writing: brainstorming, planning, drafting, revising, editing, publishing
- *Entrance Tickets*: Formative, informal assessment at the beginning of a class
- *Exit Tickets*: Formative, informal assessment at the end of class for students to self-assess
- *Student Learning Plan*: A document that identifies skills/standards focused on during a unit that students use to keep track of their learning throughout a unit.

Argumentative Unit Overview

Collaborative Argumentative Unit Overview			
Lesson #*	Activity Description	Student Learning Objective Students Will...	Resources
1	-Give Overview of Place-based collaborative writing unit -Introduce Argumentative Portion -Distribute example argumentative -Review exemplar argumentative essay -Assess with argumentative rubric	-Comprehend overview of entire unit -Identify standards for argumentative portion -Assess exemplar model with rubric	-Argumentative rubric -Argumentative example essay
2	-Regroup in same small community issue group and review group work rubric -Students select up to top 3 solutions and begin 2-column notes for issue parameters	-Identify possible solutions	-2-column notes
3	-Divide & Conquer argumentative research: students divvy up research needs and use credible sites to locate information; paraphrase information on collaborative platform like Word Online or Google Drive	-Identify their own focus for research -Identify credible sites; reuse any from explanatory? -Paraphrase relevant information	-2-column notes
4	-Divide & Conquer Argumentative Essay: students will assign each member in the group 1 part of the essay. Essay portion does not necessarily relate to research focus. -Must draft something different from Explanatory	-Identify information from group research to use to write -Draft assigned portion	-Essay/paragraph outline with requirements www.citationmachine.net
5	-Revise and Edit as a group	-Revise and edit entire essay together using the check-list	-Check-list of items for revising and editing

6	-Submit essay and self-assess on rubric	-Self-assess entire essay on rubric	-Additional copies of argumentative rubric
7	-Individual argumentative research and paraphrasing	-Complete writing process again individually	-Same as used previously in unit -Use www.procon.org

Argumentative Unit Lesson Plans

Lesson 1: Introducing the Argument	
Time Suggested: One 45-minute class	
Objectives—Students will:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify standards for argumentative writing Identify exemplar aspects Comprehend pieces of argumentative writing 	
Standards:	
Supports W.8.1: Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence	
Procedures:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Anticipatory Set: Journal and discussion—<i>What do you already know about argumentative writing? What do you want to know more about?</i> Write for 3 minutes; underline 1 sentence or phrase to share when called on. Introduce argumentative unit <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Pass out Example Argumentative Essay Teacher and class read and annotate things noticed. Then, discuss how the essay relates to items noticed from journal discussion. Identify how the essay compares (similarities and differences) to an explanatory essay. Pass out Argumentative Essay Rubric and assess essay. Notice additions and deletions to argumentative rubric compared with explanatory rubric. Debrief: Exit pass—<i>What are large differences between argumentative and explanatory writing? Identify at least 1 specific.</i> 	
Materials	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Argumentative Rubric, Appendix B, page 97 Argumentative Example Essay, Appendix B, page 94-95 	

Lesson 2: Solutions
Time Suggested: 2 classes
Objectives—Students will:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify possible solutions to solve their community issue Identify which solution is most viable and as cheap as possible
Standards:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> W.8.1: Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidenceW5: W.8.5: With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.
Procedures:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Anticipatory Set: Ahead of time, teacher should use the Scholastic website: http://choices.scholastic.com/topics/activism and find 3-4 different articles about teens making a small change that made a big difference to their community. In class, divide students up into small groups. Each group reads and discusses what the teen in the story did that made a difference. Then, each group shares out a few ideas. Then, the class identifies a similarity between these teens (ex: dedication, cheap/free solution, including others to increase impact, etc). Use as basis to jumpstart discussion regarding students' solutions to local issue. Identify that anyone can make a difference, not just an adult. (<i>*students keep these articles for next lesson's anticipatory set, too</i>). Pass out Discussion Web for argumentative writing. Students use Discussion Web to begin identifying potential solutions and potential counterarguments Select a solution the team thinks is the most reasonable and as close to free as possible. Create 2-column notes for this solution. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Key Ideas to vet solution: How will it happen? How much \$ required? Who would need to be involved? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Students do this process with #1 choice to vet solution. Students get checked off by teacher is solution looks reasonable, and can continue researching. If solution is not reasonable, student modify solution or move to idea #2 to repeat process to locate reasonable solution. Debrief: Exit pass: <i>Who or what kinds of people do you need contact information for further research? What business or government officials, etc?</i>
Materials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scholastic website articles: http://choices.scholastic.com/topics/activism Discussion Web Think Sheet, Appendix B, page 91 Student computers 2-column notes for Argumentative, Appendix B, page 92

Lesson 3: Argumentative Solution Research
Time Suggested: 3 45-minute classes
Objectives—Students will:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Divide and Conquer the argumentative solution essay • Paraphrase notes into 2-column notes
Standards:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • W.8.1a-e: Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence; a. Introduce claim(s), acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically; b. Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and accurate, relevant evidence, using credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text; c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence; d. Establish and maintain a formal style; e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented. • W.8.5: With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed. • W.8.6: Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and present the relationships between information and ideas efficiently as well as to interact and collaborate with others. • W.8.8: Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.
Procedures:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Anticipatory Set: Review Scholastic articles discussed in previous lesson for tier II and tier III vocabulary. Read & annotate, then share within their groups. Each group should compile list of exemplary tier II and tier III words. Connect these words to lower-level counterparts and additional synonyms. Share 1-2 words with class from each group, but compiled list is pasted on vocabulary bulletin board for all students' perusal. 2. Students divide and identify who is researching for which piece of the solution. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Students set up 2-column notes on Word Online and paraphrase notes as elaborations. b. Identify the counterargument and rebuttal. Identify where to paste URLs for during research to make citations later. 3. Debrief: Self-assess for group collaboration and discussion skills.
Materials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scholastic articles from previous day • Two-column notes for Argumentative, Appendix B, page 92 • Student computers

Lesson 4: Drafting the Argumentative Essay
Time Suggested: 3 45-minute classes
Objectives—Students will:
Compose an argumentative paragraph for the essay based on paraphrased notes
Standards:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • W.8.1: Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence • W.8.5: With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed. • W.8.6: Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and present the relationships between information and ideas efficiently as well as to interact and collaborate with others. • W.8.8: Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.
Procedures:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Anticipatory Set: Think-write-pair-share: <i>How might you use argumentative writing in a realistic situation in your future? Something with a teacher, parents, boss, company, law enforcement/legal?</i> After students think for about 30 second, then write for about 3 minutes. Find someone to share with that has an idea different from yours, and exchange ideas. Then, select one to share with class. 2. Begin drafting argumentative essay. Ask students to pull out the example Argumentative Essay with the rubric used to assess it and hand out Argumentative Essay Outline. Remind students about argumentative structure and requirements for each paragraph. 3. Students identify which paragraph they are drafting of the essay in Word Online. One person for each paragraph (intro, reason 1, reason 2, counterargument, conclusion) and one person for citations. Use paraphrased notes from research to write your paragraph. 4. Debrief: Exit ticket—<i>Select one to answer in detail: 1) What is going well? 2)What is something you are learning more about or improving your skills on? Or 3) What are you struggling with either in writing or with your groups—something Miss Cassidy can help you with?</i>
Materials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student computers • Argumentative Essay Layout, Appendix B, page 93 • Argumentative Essay, Appendix B, page 94-95 • Argumentative Essay Rubric, Appendix B, page 97

Lesson 5: Revise and Edit Argumentative Essay
Time Suggested: 2 45-minute classes
Objectives—Students will:
Revise essay for word choice, sentence variety, elaborations, and clarity of argument
Standards:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • W.8.1: Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence • W.8.5: With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed. • W.8.8: Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.
Procedures:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Anticipatory Set: Review elaborations and their definitions as part of the introduction to essay revisions. Ask students to pull out their elaboration sheets from explanatory essay; may need to distribute more if students have misplaced theirs. Ask students to give example sentences for each type of elaboration. May tie in Sentence Variety with this warm up. 2. Then, a Materials Monitor from each group gets an essay check-list for essay requirements. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Students review all parts of the essay, not just the part you were assigned, on Word Online. They should make suggestions to peers as well as revise their own paragraphs based on peer comments. 3. Debrief: Exit ticket—<i>What was your essay's most common errors? What errors were multiple people making? Why do you think that is?</i>
Materials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student computers • Argumentative Essay Check-sheet, Appendix B, page 96 • Argumentative Essay, Appendix B, page 94-95 • Argumentative Essay Rubric, Appendix B, page 97

Lesson 6: Argumentative Collaborative Essay Submission
Time Suggested: One 45-minute class
Objectives—Students will:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-assess on rubric and submit essay
Standards:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • W.8.1: Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence • W.8.5: With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed. • W.8.6: Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and present the relationships between information and ideas efficiently as well as to interact and collaborate with others.
Procedures:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Anticipatory Set: 3-5 minute journal: <i>How does self-assessing help you with your essay? Why might a teacher ask students to do this? What might it be teaching you to use in your future—school or outside of school?</i> Underline 1 sentence maximum to 1 phrase/Tier II/III word to share. First, share with a neighbor, then be ready to share with class. 2. If there are any final edits to make from the previous lesson, students should do them now. 3. Then, Materials Monitor should get everyone in their group a new Argumentative Essay Rubric. Students self-assess the entire essay, not just the portion they worked on. 4. Submit 1 copy of the group essay and everyone's rubric individually. 5. Consider asking students to reflect on the argumentative unit at this point. It is still fresh in their minds. 6. Debrief: How does reflecting help you with the unit? How does it help the teacher? Who else might it help? What skill are you practicing and when will you use it in the future?
Materials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Argumentative Essay Rubric, Appendix B, page 97

Lesson 7: Individual Argumentative Essay
Time Suggested: 2 weeks of 45-minute classes
Objectives—Students will:
Write an argumentative essay individually
Standards:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> W.8.1a-e: Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence; a. Introduce claim(s), acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically; b. Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and accurate, relevant evidence, using credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text; c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence; d. Establish and maintain a formal style; e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented. W.8.5: With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed. W.8.6: Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and present the relationships between information and ideas efficiently as well as to interact and collaborate with others.
Procedures:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Anticipatory Set: Journal: <i>What skill or standard will you be focusing on for your second argumentative essay—which standard did you perhaps not understand well or not complete to proficiency last time?</i> Introduce to students that they will be completing an argumentative essay following the same steps, but this time on their own. They will be selecting one topic from www.procon.org and using the resources on this site to paraphrase in their 2-column notes. Review procon.org for topics and select one. Complete a Discussion Web identifying the topic and possible pros and possible cons, then identify what side of the argument they are on. Create 2-column notes with continue paraphrasing additional elaborations for two supports of their claim and one opposition's position including a rebuttal. Then, draft essay on Word Online from 2-column notes paraphrased notes. Peer-conference with Argumentative Essay Check-sheet. Revise and edit students' own essays. Then self-assess on Argumentative Essay rubric and submit with essay. Debrief: Exit ticket—<i>What are you understanding more clearly or doing with more proficiency on your second argumentative essay?</i>
Materials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> www.procon.org Student computers Same student resources as previous lessons 1-6, Appendix B, pages 91-97

Presentation of Collaborative Research to Community Members

8th Place-based Collaborative Research Writing Unit, Part III: Presentation Preparation	
Readiness Standards—Students come to 8 th grade writing class prepared to:	
Create and deliver a polished presentation with my group members	
Enduring Understandings of Content	
How can my peers and I produce an effective presentation to clarify the issue, propose a solution, and persuade the audience to take action?	
Enduring Understandings of Presentation Creation and Delivery	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will identifying my desired audience and presentation outcome assist in the creation of my presentation? • Which type of technology will best enhance my presentation? • How can I adapt the writing process to a presentation so that it is well planned and created? • What have I learned in writing units that I can apply to a presentation (sentence types, vocabulary, elaborations, etc)? • During the presentation, what do I need to do to enhance my group's project (standing, volume, visuals, etc.)? 	
Standards	
<i>Alaska 8th Grade Standards</i>	
<i>Speaking & Listening Standards, Comprehension & Collaboration</i>	
3) Delineate a speaker's argument and specific claims, evaluating the soundness of the reasoning and relevance and sufficiency of the evidence and identifying when irrelevant evidence is introduced.	
<i>Speaking & Listening Standards, Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas</i>	
4) Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with relevant evidence, sound valid reasoning, and well-chosen details; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.	
5) Integrate multimedia and visual displays into presentations to clarify information, strengthen claims and evidence, and add interest.	
6) Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate. (See grade 8 Language standards 1 and 3 for specific expectations.)	
<i>Alaska Cultural Standards</i>	
A) Culturally-responsive educators incorporate local ways of knowing and teaching in their work.	
B) Culturally-responsive educators use the local environment and community resources on a regular basis to link what they are teaching to the everyday lives of the students.	
E) Culturally-responsive educators recognize the full educational potential of each student and provide the challenges necessary for each of them to achieve that potential.	
<i>National Council of Teachers of English Standards</i>	

8) Students use a variety of technological and information resources (e.g., libraries, databases, computer networks, video) to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge.

Established Learning Goals

Create a presentation that delivers a desired affect to an audience

Established Learning Objectives—Students will:

- Create a storyboard to organize their presentation
- Select a presentation method that best fits their concept
- Use technology to enhance the presentation
- Collaborate with peers to develop the presentation
- Deliver a well practiced presentation

Presentation Unit Overview

Collaborative Presentation Unit Overview Create and deliver a presentation of information from both collaborative essays to community adults			
Lesson #	Activity Description	Student Learning Objective Students Will...	Resources
1	-Prepare Presentation for Community review	-Plan presentation's information on slides -Divide & conquer slides among group members	-Storyboard presentation plan -Presentation Rubric
2	-Collaborate and create PowerPoint Online Presentation	-Create a PowerPoint presentation to share information with adults	-Computers
3	Present to peers	-Assess peers' presentations based on presentation rubric -Submit feedback to peers for presentation revisions	-Presentation Rubric -Students' presentations
4	Final presentation of Place-based collaborative research unit	-Present to community members	-Community member feedback

Presentation Unit Lesson Plans

Lesson 1: Prepare and Plan Community Issue Presentation
Time Suggested: 2 45-minute classes
Objectives—Students will:
Identify expectations for Community Issue Presentation
Standards:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> W.8.5: With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed. S&L.8.5: Integrate multimedia and visual displays into presentations to clarify information, strengthen claims and evidence, and add interest.
Procedures:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Anticipatory Set: What do you already know about PowerPoint and presentation expectations? Introduce presentation activity with rubric. Review expectations Handout storyboard for students to organize their presentations; must complete storyboard (which essay paragraph goes where) to begin PowerPoint Online. Which paragraphs will be explained on which slide. Encourage students to present in the same order researched and written. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Then, Divide & Conquer PowerPoint and record on Word Online who is creating which slide and what the information on the slide will be. 1 slide for all essay and presentation image citations. Create & share PowerPoint Online to begin presentation creation. Students may upgrade their presentation from a PowerPoint to something of their choice: Prezi, Podcast, iMovie, etc, if they have time, expertise, and desire to do so. Debrief: Pick one: <i>What is going well? What are you learning more about? What are you struggling with?</i>
Materials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation Rubric, Appendix B, page 101 Storyboard, Appendix B, pages 98-99 Student computers

Lesson 2: Collaborate and Create PowerPoint Online
Time Suggested: 4 45-minute classes
Objectives—Students will:
Create a PowerPoint collaboratively
Standards:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • W.8.5: With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed. • S&L.8.5: Integrate multimedia and visual displays into presentations to clarify information, strengthen claims and evidence, and add interest.
Procedures:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Anticipatory Set: <i>What should you do and what should you not do on a PowerPoint Slide?</i> Identify what students already know about creating PowerPoint presentation slides. 2. Review Dos and Don'ts of PowerPoint slides with PowerPoint examples—identify how they relate to rubric. (focus on slides, not the verbal presentation portion; that is lesson 3) 3. Then students continue working on PowerPoint Online to create presentation. Create slides but also create notes for each slide 4. Debrief: <i>How prepared is your group for a presentation? What is going well? What are you nervous about?</i>
Materials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dos and Don'ts of PowerPoint examples, Appendix B, page 100 • Student computers

Lesson 3: PowerPoint Presentations
Time Suggested: 2 classes, depending on class size and length of presentations
Objectives—Students will:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify presentation expectations • Present a PowerPoint
Standards:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • W.8.5: With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed. • S&L.8.4: Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with relevant evidence, sound valid reasoning, and well-chosen details; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation. • S&L.8.5: Integrate multimedia and visual displays into presentations to clarify information, strengthen claims and evidence, and add interest.
Procedures:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Anticipatory Set: <i>What should you do during a presentation and not do during a presentation?</i> Demonstrate examples and non-examples. Ask for student volunteers to give examples and non-examples. Review this portion of the rubric related to the presentation piece, not the slides (that was lesson 2). 2. Give students time to prepare and practice. 3. Practice presentations in front of peers. Peers use presentation rubric to assess groups. Students have time to revise presentation before adult presentations. Use lunch/tutorial time. 4. Debrief: Class discussion: <i>What are students/groups doing well in presentations? What is an area we need to focus on improving before adult presentations?</i>
Materials:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student computers • Presentation Rubrics, Appendix B, page 101

Lesson 4: Final Presentations to Community Members
Time Suggested: 1 class (or lunch period)
Objectives—Students will:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present community issue collaborative information to adults
Standards:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • S&L.8.4: Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with relevant evidence, sound valid reasoning, and well-chosen details; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation. • S&L.8.5: Integrate multimedia and visual displays into presentations to clarify information, strengthen claims and evidence, and add interest.
Procedures:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Meet during selected lunch period with notes, dressed professionally. Students should know ahead of time what date to meet. Consider putting notes in the office for students on the morning of the presentation so they remember to go to their presentation. 2. Present information to adults community members who are attending in a brown-bag lunch fashion. 3. Q&A at the end. Prepare students to respond with “I’m not sure about the answer to that question, but we can look into it and get back to you” when they are asked something they don’t know.
Materials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student computers to access PowerPoint online. Share to Screen. • PowerPoint notes for each student. • Adult community members—emailed by students to attend 1-2 weeks in advance. CC teacher.

Appendix B: Resources

Website Credibility Activity 1

Reviewing Websites

Anyone can put anything on the internet, so it's important to be sure that websites are credible (trustworthy). But how do you decide?

Aspects to look for to test credibility:

- Is the **website creator an authority** in the field? (do they know what they're talking about?)
- Is it **associated with a credible organization** and does it supply contact information?
- Is the **creator selling a product** to the website audience?
- Is there a **date** when the website was created or information published and is it current? Do **all links work**?
- Does the information seem **factual** or does it have you second guessing?
- What **ending** does the **website's URL** have?

Different websites have different endings. Do you know what they stand for and what that should mean for you—are they credible (trustworthy) or should you be wary (careful)?

Ending	What does it mean?	Credible or Wary and WHY?
<u>.edu</u>		
<u>.gov</u>		
.org		
.com		
.net		
<u>.jp</u>	Japan	
?		
?		

Website Credibility Activity 2

Credible or Not?

Directions: Individually, use the websites linked on Moodle to jot ideas down to answer the questions. Then, identify whether you believe it is Credible or Not in the forum on Moodle.

Website #1: <http://allaboutexplorers.com/explorers/>

Credible or Not and WHY? Refer to information on the previous side and defend your opinion below in complete sentences using Text Based Evidence

Website #2: <http://www.nps.gov/aleu/historyculture/unangan-internment.htm>

Credible or Not and WHY? Refer to information on the previous side and defend your opinion below in complete sentences using Text Based Evidence.

Defining and Avoiding Plagiarism PowerPoint Slides—KIBSD's *Common Ground* Resource

What is plagiarism?

And how to avoid it.

Define Plagiarism

- Stealing someone else's words or ideas and passing them off as your own.

Plagiarism Examples

- Stealing someone else's idea for your project.
- Using an essay your friend wrote, but deleting their name and putting your name at the top, even if you have their permission.
- Using an essay you wrote for a different class (7th grade PN) and submitting for your current class (8th grade PN)

Plagiarism Examples

- Copy / pasting from another source and not using quotes or identifying (citing) who originally wrote it.
- Using a thesaurus and changing every 4th or 5th word of the information you found.

How to avoid plagiarism

- Know what plagiarism is so that you don't commit this Writing Felony by accident
- Paraphrase your information (put it completely into your own words—this is why we practice this so much in elementary, KMS, and KHS)
- ALWAYS identify where you found information (applies to images, videos, etc)

Elaborations—*Step Up to Writing* resource

Elaboration Strategies

1. **Anecdotes:** a short personal narrative inserted into an essay that develops an idea or argument.

Example:

2. **Examples:** provides more specific information about an idea.

Example:

3. **Facts:** information (who, what, when, where, why) that help support your idea or argument.

Example:

4. **Definitions:** restate an unfamiliar word or phrase to tell what it means.

Example:

5. **Statistics / Data:** the numbers that help prove your idea or argument.

Example:

6. **Quotation:** Words someone else said that can help your argument.

Example:

7. **Literary Devices:** a way of saying something other than the literal meaning. (metaphors, similes, personification...)

Example:

8. **Scenarios:** a hypothetical situation or event.

Example:

9. **Description:** a way to create vivid images for the reader. (use the 5 senses: see, hear, smell, touch, taste)

Example:

10. **Dialogue:** Narrative writing - a conversation that moves along and event or develops a character.

Example:

Sentence Variety—*Step Up to Writing* resource

Sentence Variety

Types of Sentences	Examples
1. Action Verb Sentences	Articles I, II, and III of the United States Constitution define the three branches of our federal government.
2. Where or When Plus What's Happening Sentences	Each year the judicial branch of our government makes several important decisions.
3. Number (Power) Statements	The makers of the United States Constitution designed a government with three branches.
4. And, But, So, and Or Sentences	A president, the executive branch, makes appointments to important government positions, but Congress, the legislative branch, approves many of these appointments.
5. However Statements	The legislative branch of our government makes laws; however , the executive branch is responsible for making sure laws are carried out.
6. Semicolon Sentences	U.S. presidents have approved and signed many good laws; they have also vetoed a number of good laws.
7. Side-by-Side Sentences	All American citizens should vote. Their votes impact all three branches of our federal government.
8. Occasion/Position Statements	When groups or individuals challenge a law , the courts in the judicial branch decide if the law does or does not follow the intent of the Constitution.
9. Rhetorical Questions	Which branch of the federal government is the most powerful? Some governors believe that it is the executive branch.
10. A Few Good Prepositions	In time of war , the president, commander-in-chief of the nation's armed forces, makes serious decisions.
11. To Plus Verb Sentences (Infinitive)	To balance the national budget , the executive and legislative branches must work together.
12. Two Nouns and Two Commas (An Appositive)	Congress, the legislative branch of our country , makes laws.
13. Compare/Contrast Statements	The Senate and the House of Representatives have similar responsibilities ; however, they operate differently .
14. Quotations in Sentences	When Thomas Jefferson wrote that " Governments are institutions among Men deriving their just powers from the consent of all governed ," he passed on a responsibility to all Americans.

Group Role Descriptors

Group Role Descriptors



Task Master	Lead by example—stay on task and encourage all conversation not centered on the assignments to stop. Remind people who are off task to remain on task.
Recorder	Record any information that the group needs written record of or submitted to Miss Cassidy
Presenter	Present information either to the class (please stand) or Miss Cassidy
Materials Monitor	If your group needs materials, you go get them. Collect all items needed at the beginning of class as needed or as directed by Miss Cassidy. If your group has a question, you should go ask Miss Cassidy (information is also a material in this assignment).
Time Keeper	Keep an eye on the clock to be certain class items are being completed within the assigned day. Also, be certain your group will meet end-of week expectations. Work with Task Master to make this happen.
Encourager	Notice when people are working hard and focused and commend them (say “nice job”). When people don’t feel comfortable speaking up, ask them directly what they think so they feel like part of the group.
You will assess your own role participation at the end of the week as well as your group members’ participation in their roles. Focus on your job and encourage others to do the same.	
**If someone is consistently off task and creating problems for the group, please speak with Miss Cassidy so the issue can be resolved.	



Group Role Sign-up

Community Issue Project Roles**Group:** _____

Role	Week #__	Week #__	Week #__	Week #__	Week #__	Week #__
Task Master						
Recorder						
Presenter						
Materials Monitor						
Time Keeper						
Encourager						

**Everyone: researches, writes, edits, and participates in final presentation**

2-Column Notes Class Poster—*Step Up to Writing*

Information Writing

Step Up to Writing

Informal Outline

Topic = **Success in School**

★ Academic success	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– new skills<ul style="list-style-type: none">• for reading• for writing– new information<ul style="list-style-type: none">• add to what I know• use later in life
★ Social success	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– meet new people<ul style="list-style-type: none">• in class• during free time– join a team<ul style="list-style-type: none">• play• learn good techniques• help myself and others win

Conclusion = **Important Goal**

Intermediate Poster No. 4

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2-Column Notes Template, based on *Step Up To Writing*

Two-Column Notes

Name: _____

Date: _____

Period # _____



Please paraphrase all information; no copy/pasting

T=	
★ Key Ideas	--- ★ Elaborations
★ Reason #1: _____ ()	• • --- • •
★ Reason #2: _____ ()	• • --- • •
★ Reason #3: _____ ()	• • --- • •

|

Nothing should be copy/pasted. Put everything in your own words.

Weekly Point Log

Week # _____

Period _____ Group _____

	Positive Points +	Negative Points -	Total =
Monday			T=
Tuesday			T=
Wednesday			T=
Thursday			T=
Friday			
Grand Total: _____			

How to earn + points:

- Use volume level 1-2
- All group members involved and on-task
- Everyone fulfilling roles
- Active working

How to earn - points:

- Too high of volume
- Conversing with classmates not in group
- Off-task group members (conversations and/or actions)

Explanatory Rubric

Name/Period: _____

Explanatory Group Research Rubric – 8th Grade

	4 Advanced	3 Proficient	2 Developing	1 Emerging
W2 I can write an informative/explanatory text to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis or relevant content, where I:				
a. Introduction / Focus - Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information into broader categories; include formatting (e.g. headings), graphics (e.g. charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Lead is sophisticated and engages reader immediately •Skillfully orients the reader to topic(s) in introduction and previews what is to follow. •Controlling idea or main idea is focused and strongly maintained. •Sophisticated formatting aids comprehension •Introduces a topic in a sophisticated thesis list statement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Begins with lead that hooks reader. •Orients the reader to topic(s) in introduction and previews what is to follow. •Focus is clear and maintained. •Introduces a clear thesis list statement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Lead needs development •Partially orients the reader to topic(s) in introduction and previews what is to follow. •Focus is mostly clear but may not be sustained. •Introduces a topic in a thesis statement which needs development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •No lead present •Does not orient the reader to topic(s) in introduction and preview what is to follow. •May be confusing, too brief, or lack focus. •Introduces a topic in a weak thesis statement OR thesis is unclear.
b. Elaborations - Develop the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Thoroughly develops topic with relevant body paragraphs, and shows insightful understanding of topic. •Multiple and varied elaboration types used expertly throughout essay 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Develops topic with relevant body paragraphs, and shows competent understanding of topic. •A different kind of elaboration for each body paragraph and done well. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Superficially develops topic with body paragraphs, and shows superficial understanding of topic. •Most elaborations are done well, but need more variety and/or development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Inadequately develops topic with minimal body paragraphs, and shows limited or faulty understanding of topic. •Provides minimal and/or irrelevant elaborations to develop the topic.
c. Transitions - Use appropriate and varied transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Creates cohesion and clarifies relationships through embedded, buried, and subtle transitions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Correctly uses transitions to introduce new ideas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Transitions used, but more development needed to create cohesion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Uses few and limited transitions/linking words, phrases, and clauses.
d. Language - Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Student doubles required amount of bolded sophisticated language. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Student meets requirement of bolded Tier II/III words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Student attempts to meet requirement of bolded Tier II/III words, but more development needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Little attempt to meet bolded vocabulary requirement
f. Conclusion - Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Restates thesis in a fresh and sophisticated manner •Summarizes key ideas in new ways •Leaves Reader with a thought-provoking and social change task 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Restates thesis in new structure •Summarizes key ideas •Leaves reader with a meaningful task 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Restates thesis too similarly to thesis •Some key ideas summarized; needs development •Leaves reader with too simple a task 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Restating thesis is weak or unidentifiable •Key ideas restated, but not in new way •No reader's task. •Conclusion leaves reader needing more closure to essay

Explanatory Essay Example with *Step Up To Writing* colors*Example Community Issue Essay**By Miss Cassidy*

Name

Date

Period

Fabulous title (no assignment labels, please)

With the current obesity crisis within the United States, most communities are making strides towards creating communities where people can more easily access areas for recreation. This is not the case for Kodiak, Alaska. Kodiak lacks bike paths, connecting trails, and safe bike lanes for travel on roadways for people to recreate and exercise.

To begin, bicyclists in Kodiak include people of all ages and all walks of life. According to Mr. Jeremiah Gardner, owner of Kodiak's only bike shop 58 Degrees North, he sells and services an equal number of bikes to a myriad of groups. He sells to children, teens, adults; males and females; mountain bikes, road bikes, and BMX bikes; people from lower-income families to people in high-income families; bikes for recreation and bikes for transportation. Bike trails are a community issue. This is not specific to only one community group.

In addition, this issue also affects the wide variety of community members who own and ride bicycles. When children cannot get to a neighborhood or park by bicycle trail, or teens cannot travel by bike to a friend's home, parents will drive them. If adults cannot easily commute to work by bicycle, they will also opt to drive. The times that recreating by bicycle on a path is not a easy option, bicycling will not happen. And when mountain bike trails do not connect with a bike path, people must drive to a trail to begin their exercise. Although these issues exist, some people still choose to bike to work, which can be a difficult and unsafe proposition in a community without appropriate biking infrastructure.

Finally, Kodiak continues to build new neighborhoods without considering additional bike paths which continues the biking issue. Neighborhoods are where our local families raise

*Example Community Issue Essay**By Miss Cassidy*

their children. If children are raised in places where no separate bike path exists, we are setting our community up for failure. Potentially, kids riding bikes could be hit by cars since they do not have a separate and safe location. Additionally, there is the potential that kids will not be raised riding bikes—parents will not buy them and kids will not learn to love them—if there is no safe space. These issues will continue the cycle addressed in the first paragraph of obesity. This is not an issue of the past, this is an issue of today.

In conclusion, Kodiak's bike path status quo is an important issue for all Kodiak residents. Please support our current and future citizens by creating spaces where they may be safe away from speeding cars to ride their bikes. Please support our current and future citizens by creating spaces to encourage healthy lifestyles.

Explanatory Example Essay without *Step Up To Writing* colors

Name
Date
Period

Fabulous title (no assignment labels, please)

With the current obesity crisis within the United States, most communities are making strides towards creating communities where people can more easily access areas for recreation. This is not the case for Kodiak, Alaska. *Kodiak lacks bike paths, connecting trails, and safe bike lanes for travel on roadways for people to recreate and exercise.*

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*Example Community Issue Essay**By Miss Cassidy*

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Explanatory Essay Layout with *Step Up To Writing* colors

Group Writing	Community Issue Explanatory Essay	Name: _____
Overview	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All information on shared document, not hard paper 2. Divide and Conquer essay paragraphs 3. Who will do which paragraph? *please type on new shared document titled: Your class period, Your Group Name & #, Subject of your Essay. 4. Everyone types something for draft. 5. Revise and Edit essay together. 6. DUE Tuesday, February 2nd. 	
Paragraph 1 Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hook/Lead. Grab reader's attention (BLUE) and introduce the content in 1-3 sentences. • Thesis Statement: What will your essay prove (State the issue) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Example: Kodiak lacks bike paths, connecting trails, and safe bike lanes for travel on roadways. 	
Paragraph 2 First body para.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition + Key Idea to introduce focus for paragraph • Elaborations to prove your point. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use 1 kind elaboration not used elsewhere. 	
Paragraph 3 Second body para.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition + Key Idea to introduce focus for paragraph • Elaborations to prove your point. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use 1 new kind of elaboration not used elsewhere. 	
Paragraph 4 Third body para.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition + Key Idea to introduce focus for paragraph • Elaborations to prove your point. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use 1 other new kind elaboration not used elsewhere. 	
Paragraph 5 Conclusion Paragraph	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restate your Thesis in a new way with a switched structure and synonyms. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Example: In essence, the lack of paths, interconnecting trails, biking lanes with motorized traffic is detrimental to the safe and efficient biking travel within the Kodiak community. • Wrap up your essay by saying something meaningful for your audience to ponder. 	
Reminders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audience: The group of local adults in leadership positions. • Word Choice: Sophisticated words (3 bold words per paragraph) • Elaborations: 1 new kind in each paragraph • Sentence Variety: 1 new kind per paragraph 	

Explanatory Essay Revision Check-sheet

Your Name: _____

Community Issue Explanatory Essay Final Revisions

Complete as a group, please. Don't focus on the paragraph YOU wrote; too easy to miss errors.

1. ____ Whomever created the document your essay is saved on, please title it: Class Period, Group name, Group Number, Essay topic (EX: 7, Bike Enthusiasts, 3, Bike Trails in Kodiak)
2. ____ All Names (First and Last), Date, Period Header (View > Header and Footer)
3. ____ Title = CREATIVE. Not a label, please.
4. ____ Your 5 paragraphs are in the order that makes most sense—do you need to reorganize your body paragraphs more logically?
5. ____ 1 Elaboration per paragraph?
6. ____ Under all body paragraphs are Citations
7. ____ Cambria, Size 12 (the default is 11; you will have to manually change it), double spaced
8. ____ Label each paragraph by its content, like a heading in a science or history book.
9. ____ **Tier II and Tier III words bolded** (3 per paragraph)?
10. ____ Sentence types underlined (1 per paragraph)?
11. ____ N2SBWTSW per paragraph; except for in addition / in conclusion.
12. ____ Topic Sentences begin with a different transition? (Any embedded transitions?)
13. ____ Command + F = Find. Type in Dead Words/Tier 1 words
14. ____ Locate appropriate 1 visual that best fits your topic. Be sure URL is put your citations. Please put visual inside your essay; not at top or bottom. Can you wrap the text? (this is my challenge to you)
15. ____ Read your essay aloud (level 1 whisper volume) to “hear” and catch any errors.
While reading aloud:
 - a. ____ Are you sure everything is paraphrased and all in your own words? No plagiarizing?
 - b. ____ Do all the details in each paragraph support their own topic sentence? If not, cut!
 - c. ____ Your details are explained enough to prove your topic sentence? If not, Google!
 - d. ____ Capitalizations correct?
 - e. ____ Spelling correct?
 - f. ____ Punctuation correct?
 - g. ____ Grammar correct?
16. ____ PRINT and fetch from library
Once printed do the following on the hard copy:
 17. ____ Circle all transitions and transitional phrases in the three paragraphs (neatly, please)
 18. ____ Annotate and label underlined sentence types (neatly, please)
 19. ____ Annotate and label elaborations in each paragraph (neatly, please)
 20. ____ Staple essay and Submit to turn-in bin.

Discussion Web for argumentative writing—created by *Step Up to Writing*

Discussion Web

YES	REASONS	NO
	QUESTION:	
Claim:		

Two-Column Notes for Argumentative Essay Structure, based on *Step Up To Writing*

Two-Column Notes

Name: _____

Date: _____

Period # _____

Please paraphrase all information; no copy/pasting

T=	
★ Key Ideas	--- ★ Elaborations
★ Reason #1: _____ ()	■ • • --- • •
★ Reason #2: _____ ()	■ • • --- • •
★ Counterargument: _____ () <i>*State the Counterargument</i> "Opponents state..." <i>*Concede</i> "It is true that..." <i>*Rebuttal</i> "; however, ..." <i>*Provide evidence (pinks) to support rebuttal</i>	■ • • --- • •

|

Nothing should be copy/pasted. Put everything in your own words.

Argumentative Essay Layout with *Step Up To Writing* colors

Group Writing

Community Issue Argumentative Essay

Name: _____

Overview	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All typing on a shared document—if you're absent, they need access to your writing. 2. Divide and Conquer essay paragraphs in 2-column notes (hard copy in folder, please) 3. Revise and Edit essay together (use check-sheet) 4. Final Draft DUE _____.
Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hook/Lead. Grab reader's attention (BLUE) and introduce the content in 1-3 sentences. Could use repetition, startling statement, rhetorical question, etc. • Claim: What will your essay prove (State the issue) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Example: Kodiak should incorporate a bike lane on the existing Rezanof Drive blacktop.
Reason 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition + Reason 1 to introduce focus for paragraph • Elaborations to prove your point.
Reason 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition + Reason 2 to introduce focus for paragraph • Elaborations to prove your point.
Counter-argument & Rebuttal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topic sentence: Opponents would contend that... • Concession: It is true that... • Rebuttal: However... • Support the rebuttal
Conclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restate your claim in a new way with a switched structure and synonyms. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Example: In essence, by creating a bike path in the most effective manner possible, it will allow residents of all ages to more safely pedal around town. • Call to Action: what do you want your audience to do now? How can they support your argument?
Reminders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audience: The group of local adults in leadership positions. • Word Choice: Sophisticated words (3 bold words per paragraph) • 1 Elaboration per paragraph • Sentence Variety: 1 kind per paragraph

Argumentative Example Essay

Miss Cassidy
2/05/2016
Period 7

Do you dare to D.A.R.E.?

Drug prevention education programs inform students. Drug prevention education programs empower students. Drug prevention education programs **maintain** students' health. The Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) program is **effective** for America's youth.

One key **reason** to continue to use the D.A.R.E. program is that it is proven to **prevent** drug abuse with students from elementary through high school. Data provided by US Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration found that students who participated in D.A.R.E. were less likely to abuse tobacco, alcohol, and marijuana than those who did not participate. Another irrefutable study published by *Journal of the National Medical Association* found that students who participated in D.A.R.E. are five times less likely to begin smoking.

Another **pivotal** reason for **subscribing** to the D.A.R.E. program is that it helps students when they need to make critical decisions about drugs. A study by the University of Akron found that D.A.R.E. participating students were 6% higher in their decision making skills than **nonparticipants**. These students will not yield to the pressure of abusing drugs offered to them.

Opponents of the D.A.R.E. program claim that D.A.R.E. is not beneficial for American kids because of its supposed lead to increased drug use. It is true that not 100% of students who participate in the D.A.R.E. program will be drug free for 100% of their lives; however, it is known that while some teens experiment or succumb to peer pressure, even fewer become recreational drug users, regardless of their D.A.R.E. participation. To **extrapolate** that this

experimenting leads to increased use of drugs due to participation in the D.A.R.E. program is a fallacy.

Educating students with the D.A.R.E. program will allow them to make educated choices and resist drug abuse. Will a country that does not educate students about drug abuse be able to stand together to fight against the drugs that attempt to destroy a community's families and livelihoods? Could a country possibly ward off drugs if its youths were never exposed and educated to their dangers? Sheltering students from the harms and evils of drug abuse will not make them stronger. Please consider the positives D.A.R.E. education has brought to the youths of your community, and please support the D.A.R.E. program for your community's children.

Citation

"D.A.R.E. - ProCon.org." *ProCon.org Headlines*. Web. 18 Feb. 2016.

Argumentative Essay Check-list

Your Name: _____

Community Issue Argumentative Essay Final Revisions**Please focus on the essay as a whole, not just the portion you contributed.**

1. ____ Whomever created the document your essay is saved on, please title it before sharing with me
2. ____ All Names (First and Last), Date, Period Header (*View > Header and Footer*)
3. ____ Title = CREATIVE. Not a label, please.
4. ____ Your 5 paragraphs are in the order that makes most sense—do you need to reorganize your body paragraphs more logically?
5. ____ 1 Elaboration per paragraph? (*see elaboration sheet*)
6. ____ Under the essay are Citations (www.citationmachine.net > MLA)
7. ____ Cambria, Size 12 (*the default is 11; you will have to manually change it*), double spaced
8. ____ Label each paragraph by its content, like a heading in a science or history book.
9. ____ **Tier II and Tier III words bolded** (3 per paragraph)?
10. ____ Sentence types underlined (1 per paragraph)?
11. ____ N2SBWTSW per paragraph; except for *In addition* / *In conclusion*.
12. ____ Topic Sentences begin with a different transition? (*Any embedded transitions?*)
13. ____ Command + F = Find. Type in Dead Words/Tier 1 words
14. ____ Locate appropriate 1 visual that best fits your topic. Be sure URL is cited. Please put visual inside your essay; not at top or bottom. Can you wrap the text? (this is my challenge to you)
15. ____ Read your essay aloud (level 1 whisper volume) to “hear” and catch any errors.
While reading aloud:
 - a. ____ Are you sure everything is paraphrased and all in your own words? No plagiarizing?
 - b. ____ Do all the details in each paragraph support their own topic sentence? If not, cut!
 - c. ____ Your details are explained enough to prove your topic sentence? If not, do a bit more research!
 - d. ____ Capitalizations correct?
 - e. ____ Spelling correct?
 - f. ____ Punctuation correct?
 - g. ____ Grammar correct?
16. ____ PRINT and fetch from library
17. ____ Staple essay and Submit to turn-in bin.
18. ____ Everyone completes an Argumentative self-assessment on whole essay; submit to turn-in bin without sharing with partners.

Argumentative Essay Rubric

Name/Period: _____

ARGUMENTATIVE WRITING RUBRIC



	1 Emerging	2 Developing	3 Proficient	4 Advanced
W1 I can write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence while I:				
A) Introduce claim(s), acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically	-Claim is difficult to identify. -Opposing claim is difficult to identify (counterargument) -Reasons and evidence are weak and minimal.	-Claim is evident, but not well developed or clear. -Opposition claim identified, but not well developed or clear (counterargument) -Reasons and evidence included, but not well developed or organized.	-Introduces claim, developed and clear -Acknowledge claim from opposing side, developed and clear (counterargument) -Organizes reasons/evidence logically, developed and clear	-Sophisticated claim, well developed and clarified -Opposition positions sophisticatedly identified, well developed, and clarified (counterargument) -Reasons and evidence sophisticatedly organized, well developed, and clarified.
B) Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and accurate, relevant evidence, using credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text	-Minimal elaborations per paragraph—not well developed -Minimal elaboration types in essay—not well developed	-1-2 elaborations in each paragraph. -3-4 elaborations in essay	-Clearly develops topic with 2-3 elaborations per paragraph -5 well developed total elaboration types in essay.	-Clearly develops topic with 3 elaborations in every paragraph -At least 7 types of well developed elaborations in essay.
C) Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence Word Choice Dead Words	-Minimal transitions; many missing. -Many vague, general, low-level choice words. Few bolded words. -Few sentence types in essay	-Formulaic transitions; redundant transitions; some may be missing. -Some bolded sophisticated words per paragraph. Many vague/dead words. -1 sentence type in some paragraphs	-Transitions well used and help the audience move through the essay. -3 bolded sophisticated words per paragraph. Few dead words. -1 sentence type per paragraph	-Sophisticated and embedded transitions that use content to move the reader through the essay. -Much care put into word choice; all higher-level words choices make sense. Essay has sophisticated vocab and academic language. -Multiple types of sentences per paragraph
D) Establish and maintain a formal style	-Informal language throughout essay	-Some informal language mixed with some formal language appropriate to topic.	-Overall formal language use appropriate to topic with limited informal.	-No informal language; language is formal and appropriate to topic and task.
E) Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.	-Conclusion is nearly identical to introduction OR conclusion is not developed enough to be a concluding statement and support argument	-Conclusion attempts to reiterate argument. -Call to Action simplistic	-Conclusion redefines focus of essay utilizing new sentence structures and vocabulary. -Call to Action present, related to essay, and possible	-Conclusion expertly restates purpose of the essay. -Call to Action sophisticated and reasonable
L1-L2) I can demonstrate the conventions of standard English grammar, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.	-Multiple errors in conventions that audience has difficulty focusing on and/or understanding content.	-Several errors in conventions that somewhat detract audience.	-Clearly uses English conventions well and effectively; 1-2 errors that do not detract.	-No errors in conventions; student uses sophisticated punctuation correctly without prompting

Presentation Storyboard

Group # and Class: _____

PowerPoint Storyboard

Slide 1—Title and Names



Slide 2—Explanatory Thesis



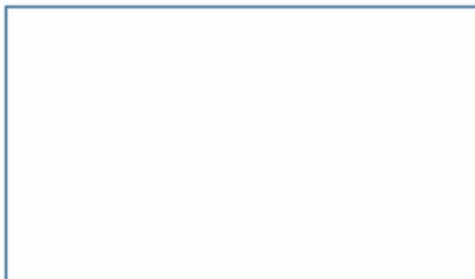
Slide 3—Explanatory Para. 2



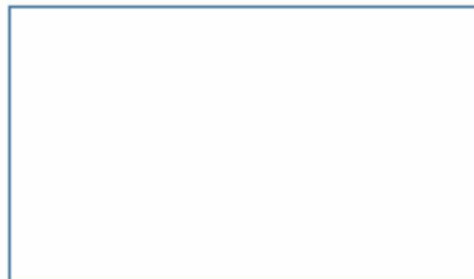
Slide 4—Explanatory Para. 3



Slide 5—Explanatory Para. 4

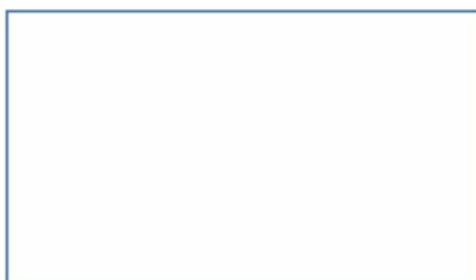


Slide 6—Argumentative Claim

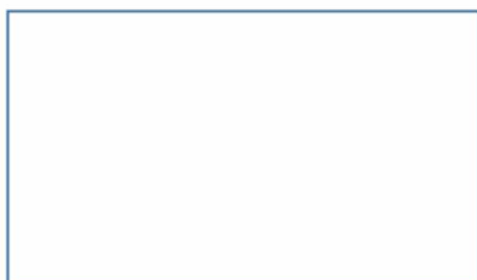


Group # and Class: _____

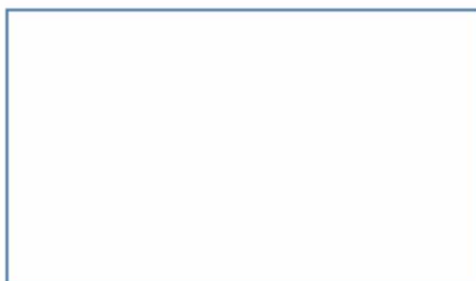
Slide 7—Argumentative Para 2



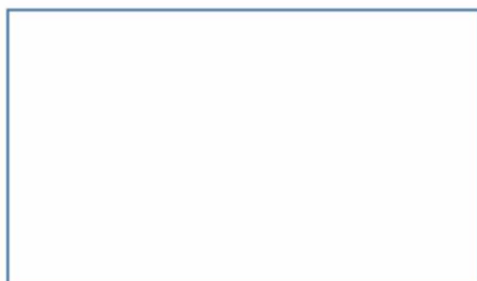
Slide 8—Argumentative Para 3



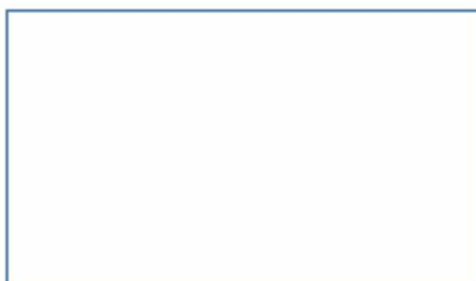
Slide 9—Argumentative Para 4



Slide 10—Conclusion & Call to Action



Slide 11—Citations

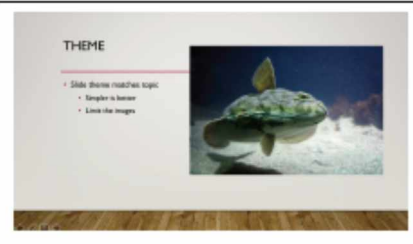


Slide 12—Thank you? Questions?



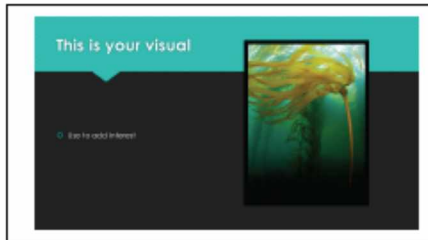
PowerPoint Presentation Dos and Don'ts PowerPoint Slides

PowerPoint Presentations: What to-do and not-to-do



Please, no animations

- **Disabling**
- **Activities:** Yes!
- **Serious presentations:** NO.
- **Take more time than worth**



PLEASE DON'T TYPE IN ALL CAPITALS

- SHOUTING AT AUDIENCES
- RUDE
 - CAPITALS HARD TO READ
 - ACCORDING TO RESEARCH
- Please use correct capitalisation
- Easier to read
 - According to research

- **Don't make your slides boring**



Review

- **What is one thing you SHOULD do in a PowerPoint Presentation?**
- **What is one thing you should NOT do in a PowerPoint Presentation?**

Presentation Rubric

Name: _____



Collaborative Community Issue Presentation Rubric

	4	3	2	1
S&L1b. Follow rules for collegial discussions and decision-making, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed <i>*While working on presentation</i> <i>*During presentation →</i>	-Outstanding and mature communication between group members regarding task. -Mutual respect is evident in words and actions -Students not only completing their role, offering assistance to others in group who are struggling	-Effective communication among group members -Mutual respect is evident -Students participating in divide & conquer and individual roles well.	-Communication is mostly present, help needed to get group on same page -Interactions are mostly respectful, reminders needed. -Group members mostly performing their roles, some assistance needed.	-Little respect demonstrated among group -Collaboration not evident; constant arguing present instead -Students not performing their part
	-Everyone speaks equally	-Everyone speaks some	-Not everyone speaks	-Not all participate
W4. Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with relevant evidence, sound valid reasoning, and well-chosen details; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.	- Key ideas expertly identified and explained - Elaborations to support all key ideas included; research-based - Eye contact is mostly on audience, and only occasionally refers to notes (preparation evident) - Volume level 3 and intonation is expertly done—pitch and volume match key points (preparation evident) - Pronunciation is crisp and clear (Preparation evident)	-Presentation focuses on key ideas from explanatory and argumentative essays. - Researched elaborations provided for each point; in essay AND in presentation. - Eye contact mostly audience (practice evident) - Volume level 3 (presentation), using intonation where appropriate (practice evident) - Pronunciation is peaking slowly and clearly (practice evident)	-Presentation may not contain all key ideas -Presentation needs additional support (elaborations) for key ideas - Eye contact sometimes on audience, but mostly on notes - Volume dips away from 3 to 2 at times - Pronunciation not always clear—fast/slurring *not much practice evident	-Presentation lacks key ideas important to issue -Presentation lacks elaborations to support essay - Eye contact is minimal - Volume is hard to hear for most of presentation - Pronunciation makes it difficult to understand, even when audible. *Probably spent little effort practicing
W5. Integrate multimedia and visual displays into presentations to clarify information, strengthen claims and evidence, and add interest.	-PowerPoint follows expectations: --Key Ideas bulleted/no sens/paras --Font & Colors & Size used to focus on key ideas --Images add power to argument and cited	-PowerPoint follows expectations: --Key Ideas/no sens/paras --Font & Colors & Size --Images add interest to presentation and cited	-PowerPoint follows some expectations: --Key Ideas may have sens/paras on some slides --Font & Colors & Size follow some suggestions --Images clutter or add little interest to presentation	-PowerPoint follows few if any expectations: --Key Ideas may have sens/paras on most slides --Font & Colors & Size hard to read --Images clutter or add little interest to presentation; not cited
L1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking;	-2 to no errors of English in verbal & media presentation	-3-5 errors of English in verbal & media presentation, but do not distract from presentation	-5 to 10 errors of English in verbal & media presentation; distracting to presentation	-11+ errors of English in verbal & media presentation; very distracting to presentation

Alaska 8th Grade English Language Arts Standards Applicable to Unit—Alaska Department of Education and Early Development**Writing Standards 6-12**

Grade 8 students:		
Text Types and Purposes		
<p>1. Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.</p> <p>a. Introduce claim(s), acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.</p> <p>b. Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and accurate, relevant evidence, using credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.</p> <p>c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.</p> <p>d. Establish and maintain a formal style.</p> <p>e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.</p>	<p>2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.</p> <p>a. Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information into broader categories; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.</p> <p>b. Develop the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.</p> <p>c. Use appropriate and varied transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.</p> <p>d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.</p> <p>e. Establish and maintain a formal style.</p> <p>f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.</p>	<p>3. Use narrative writing to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.</p> <p>a. Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and point of view and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.</p> <p>b. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, and reflection, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.</p> <p>c. Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence, signal shifts from <u>one time</u> frame or setting to another, and show the relationships among experiences and events.</p> <p>d. Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to advance the action and convey experiences and events.</p> <p>e. Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on the narrated experiences or events.</p>

Writing Standards 6-12**Grade 8 students:****Production and Distribution of Writing**

4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

(Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)

5. With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1–3 up to and including grade 8.)

6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and present the relationships between information and ideas efficiently as well as to interact and collaborate with others.

Research to Build and Present Knowledge

7. Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.

8. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.

9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

a. Apply grade 8 Reading standards to literature (e.g., “Analyze how a modern work of fiction draws on themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths, traditional stories, or religious works such as the Bible, including describing how the material is rendered new.”).

b. Apply grade 8 Reading standards to literary nonfiction (e.g., “Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text [e.g., identifies bias and propaganda techniques, well-supported logical arguments], assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; recognize when irrelevant evidence is introduced.”).

Speaking and Listening Standards

Grade 8 students:

Comprehension and Collaboration

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| <p>1. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 8 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.</p> <p>a. Come to discussions prepared, having read or researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.</p> | <p>b. Follow rules for collegial discussions (e.g., establishing norms: taking turns, paraphrasing, respecting diverse viewpoints), and decision-making (e.g., coming to consensus), track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.</p> <p>c. Pose questions that connect the ideas of several speakers and respond to others' questions and comments with relevant evidence, observations, and ideas.</p> | <p>d. Acknowledge new information expressed by others, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views in light of the evidence presented.</p> <p>2. Analyze the purpose of information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively/data-related, orally) and evaluate the motives (e.g., social, commercial, political) behind its presentation.</p> <p>3. Delineate a speaker's argument and specific claims, evaluating the soundness of the reasoning and relevance and sufficiency of the evidence and identifying when irrelevant evidence is introduced.</p> |
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Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

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| <p>4. Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with relevant evidence, sound valid reasoning, and well-chosen details; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.</p> | <p>5. Integrate multimedia and visual displays into presentations to clarify information, strengthen claims and evidence, and add interest.</p> | <p>6. Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate. (See grade 8 Language standards 1 and 3 for specific expectations.)</p> |
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